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THE

WORKS

OF THE

REVERend AND LEARNED

ISAAC WATTS, D.D.

CONTAINING, BESIDES HIS

SERMONS, AND ESSAYS ON MISCELLANEOUS SUBJECTS,

SEVERAL ADDITIONAL PIECES,

Selected from his Manuscripts

BY THE

REV. DR. JENNINGS, AND THE REV. DR. DODDRIDGE, IN 1753:

TO WHICH ARE PREFIXED,

MEMOIRS OF THE LIFE OF THE AUTHOR,

COMPILED

BY THE REV. GEORGE BURDER.

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A NEW

ESSAY ON CIVIL POWER

IN THINGS SACRED;

OR,

AN INQUIRY AFTER AN ESTABLISHED RELIGION,

CONSISTENT WITH

THE JUST LIBERTIES OF MANKIND,

AND PRACTICABLE

UNDER EVERY FORM OF CIVIL GOVERNMENT.

THE

PREFACE.

THE author of these papers has frequently fallen into company, wherein he had occasion to converse on the topics of liberty and power, both civil and religious: And having never settled and ranged his own ideas and reasonings thereupon, in so exact and so harmonious an order as he wished, he, some years ago, sat himself down to try if he could draw out his thoughts into a regular scheme, whereby he might better confirm or correct his own conduct. He then applied himself to a diligent and faithful inquiry, without consulting other authors, how far his own reason would carry him toward the establishment of any certain religion in a country or nation, with a real desire to find a just foundation for it, and try how far it could be brought into form and method.

And that he might secure himself the better from all prejudices arising from present establishments, he proposed to himself the idea of a new erected state or government of any kind whatsoever, laying aside all prepossessions and influences from the present statutes and customs of men, and from the appearances of things in any nation whatsoever, while he was engaged in these speculations.

In matters of practice he has always shewn himself, on every occasion, a constant and sincere friend and faithful subject to our British government; and as he endeavours to pay every one, in church and state, their due, so he rejoices in the protestant succession to the crown, and the illustrious family which possesses it. And it is the desire of his soul, that our present rightful sovereign, King George the Second, may have every grace and blessing poured down upon his royal person, to render him a long and glorious instrument of divine mercy, to diffuse blessings over the whole protestant world, and particularly over the British nation.

As the author abhors the thought of raising seditions in the state under our happy constitution, from any pretences either civil or religious, so he has no views of disturbing any character, or set of men, in those just privileges and possessions which they enjoy by the laws of the land, for he possesses all his own privileges by the same.

He is so well convinced of our happy situation, above and beyond almost every other nation under heaven, that he does not suppose it can be either proper or lawful for any persons or parties among us, to attempt to shake the present foundations of our

government, in order to introduce in practice such a scheme of liberty in matters of conscience as these papers may describe in speculation. Surely we value our British constitution and the privileges we enjoy, both civil and sacred, at too high a rate, ever to bring the hazard and loss of them into a competition with any new schemes and models, which may be formed by the warm imaginations or doubtful reasonings of men.

Yet it may be proper and useful to any man for his own satisfaction to enter into this subject, and to search it through and through, according to his best capacity, that he may form a better judgment of the many late contests in our nation concerning penal laws and tests, in civil and religious affairs. The author was very desirous to try " how far his reason could establish a national religion," and adjust and limit the common rights of mankind, both sacred and civil, under this establishment in any country whatsoever, wherein religion may be professed in various forms; and at the same time to maintain a perfect consistence with all due liberty of conscience, and support the just authority of supreme rulers. What he had written on this subject he was desired to publish as a matter of further inquiry to those who have thought much on this argument: And perhaps it may serve to lead those who have never much thought of it into a more natural and easy track of thinking and reasoning about it.

If any thing in this Essay shall prove so happy as to shed one peaceful and serene beam of light upon this dark and noisy controversy, he hopes to find forgiveness and acceptance among his best readers: And he would take pleasure in seeing such light further improved by minds better furnished, till it spread itself into a fair and glorious day. Such a clear and harmonious view of these subjects would do much toward the security and ease of civil government in any particular occurrences, as well as toward the general advantage of true religion and the support of just liberty, which are three of the most valuable privileges of mankind, and the choicest blessings on this side heaven.

March 20th, 1738—9.

A NEW

ESSAY ON CIVIL POWER

IN THINGS SACRED;

OR,

AN INQUIRY AFTER AN ESTABLISHED RELIGION,

CONSISTENT WITH THE JUST LIBERTIES OF MANKIND, AND PRACTICABLE UNDER EVERY FORM OF CIVIL GOVERNMENT.

SECTION I.

OF THE NATURE AND ENDS OF CIVIL GOVERNMENT, WITH THE SEVERAL KINDS OF IT, AND ITS EXTENT TO RELIGION.

I. THE design of civil government is to secure the persons, the properties, the just liberty, and peace of mankind from the invasions and the injuries of their neighbours: Whereas if there were no such thing as government amongst men, the stronger would often make inroads upon the peace and possessions, the liberties and the lives of those that were weaker; and universal confusion and disorder, mischiefs, murders, and ten thousand miseries, would overspread the face of the earth.

II. In order to this general good, *viz.* the preservation of the persons of men, with their peace and possessions, mankind have been led by the principles of reason and self-preservation to join themselves in distinct civil societies; wherein, as by a compact expressed, or implied, every single person is concerned in the welfare and safety of all the rest, and all engage their assistance to defend any of the rest when their peace or possessions are invaded: So that by this means every single member of the society has the wisdom and strength of the whole engaged for his security and defence.

III. To attain this end most happily, different societies have chosen different forms of government, as they thought most conducive to obtain it.

1. Some have deemed it proper to be governed by a single person, and have ventured to put the authority and power of making and executing laws for guarding their persons and properties, and for avenging their injuries, into the hands of a single person; and have obliged themselves to assist and support him in the due exercise of this authority. This is called kingly government, or monarchy: And where this kingly power has no limitations, it is called absolute monarchy, or sovereignty.

2. Others have committed this same power to the hands of a few great men or nobles, persons of riches, or high birth, or power, or who are supposed to have superior wisdom

and influence, who shall act in concert with one another to promote this end. This is called aristocracy; especially when it is agreed that these great men shall have their heirs for their successors, or shall have a right to choose their own successors themselves; for then the people have divested themselves of all share in the government.

3. A third sort have chosen a popular government, that is, where the people themselves meet and make laws, and determine things of importance by a common vote, or the sentence of the major part. But where the society is so numerous, that the people cannot all meet together for this end, they have parcelled out themselves into many districts, and chosen particular persons to represent them in each district. Thus the people are said to act and govern themselves by these their representatives, which are chosen anew by the people as often as they think fit, or at annual or any stated seasons which the people agree upon. This is called democracy; and such a state is a proper republic, or commonwealth in the strictest sense.

4. There are other societies again, which have made a compound government out of several of these; so the ancient Roman government had the *patres*, or *patricii*, or senators as their nobility, and yet the plebeians or common people had much share in the government too by their power in choosing officers, &c. After the year of the city three hundred and eighty-seven, the two consuls were generally one patrician and one plebeian. Sometimes there is made a mixture of all these forms of government: Such was the Roman under their emperors, if not under some of their kings; at least, there was the appearance of it.

But the most regular mixture seems to be that wherein the chosen representatives of the people have their distinct share of government, the nobles or great men have their share, and a single person, or the king has his part and share in this authority, and all agreed upon by the whole community, or by persons chosen to represent them. This is called a mixed monarchy; and herein these three estates of the kingdom are supposed by mutual assistances and mutual limitations, not only to secure the common peace, the liberty and welfare of the nation from enemies, but to guard it also from any dangerous inroads that might be made upon it by any one of these three powers themselves. Such is the happiness of Great Britain, under the king, lords, and commons.

IV. Here let it be noted, that whosoever has the power of making laws, whether the king, the nobles, or the people, or all these together, yet still the particular execution of these laws must be committed to many particular magistrates or officers, and they are usually fixed in a subordination to one another, each of them fulfilling their several posts throughout the nation, in order to secure the general peace.

V. In all these forms of government there is, as I hinted before, a compact or agreement between the governors and governed, expressed or implied, *viz.* that the governors shall make it their care and business to protect the people in their lives, liberties, and properties, by restraining or punishing those who injure, attack, or assault them; and that the governed submit to be punished, if any of them are found guilty of these practices: And also that they oblige themselves to pay such homage, honours, and taxes, and yield such assistance to the governors with their natural powers, and their money or possessions, as may best obtain the great ends of government, and the common safety of the whole society.

VI. For this purpose, therefore, each person by this compact willingly abridges himself of some part of his original liberty or property, for the common service of the

society of which he is a member: And he engages himself with his powers and capacities to defend and preserve the peace, and order, and government of the society, so long as he and his fellow-subjects are protected by it, in the enjoyment of all their natural rights and liberties. The very reason of man and the nature of things shew us the necessity of such agreements.

VII. From this view of things, it appears, that though no particular form of government, besides the ancient jewish, could claim divine right, yet all government, in general, is originally from God, as he is the author of nature and reason, and the God of order and justice: And every particular government which is agreed upon by men, so far as it retains the original design of government, and faithfully preserves the peace and liberties of mankind, ought to be submitted to, and is supported by the authority of God; for it is God our Creator, who, by the light of reason, hath led mankind into civil government, in order to their mutual help, and preservation, and peace.

In this sense it is that the two great apostles, Peter and Paul, vindicate civil governors, and demand subjection to them from Christians; Rom. xiii. 1—4, *Let every soul be subject to the higher powers; for there is no power but of God: The powers that be, are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God, and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation,* that is, are condemned.; *for rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil.* 1 Peter ii. 13, *Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man, for the Lord's sake; whether it be to the king as supreme, or to governors, as to them who are sent by him, for the punishment of evil-doers, and the praise of them that do well.* What St. Paul saith *is ordained of God,* that is, in general, as civil government, or civil powers, St. Peter calls *the ordinance of man,* that is, in particular, as to the several forms of this government which men agree upon, or appoint: And indeed God has left it to men to agree upon and appoint the particular forms: And so far as any of them pursue and attain this end, they must be submitted to, and supported, as an appointment or ordinance both of God and man.

VIII. Though civil government is an ordinance of God, and appointed by him according to the light of reason, and is thus far supported by divine revelation, yet in its proper aims and designs it hath no direct reach nor authority beyond the benefit of men in this world: Nor do the things of religion, nor the affairs of a future state, come within its cognizance, any further than they have a most evident reference to the natural and civil welfare of men in the present life: It was only for the security of their natural and civil interests and rights, that men at first joined themselves in civil societies, and not that their governors should choose their religion for them.

Government itself is a necessary thing in this world, and a natural or moral institution of God among persons of all sorts of religion, whether heathens, turks, or christians, to preserve them in present peace: Nor do any of these religions alter the nature of civil government.*

IX. Whereas if civil government did properly extend its authority to religion and the things of a future happiness, no government or governors could be said to be appointed of God who are of a false religion; and those only who know, and teach, and promote the true religion, and lead people in a right way to this future happiness, could be of

* What exception must be made for the jewish government, which was revealed to Moses, and was almost entirely divine, shall be taken notice of in its due place.

God's appointment; even as no government extending to civil things can be said to be of God, any further than it tends to promote the civil peace and welfare.

But if such an unreasonable and absurd opinion as this were allowed, *viz.* that the appointment of true religion belongs to the civil government, and there is but one true religion, it would cut off civil government from being an appointment of God among all the nations of the earth, and in all ages of the world, who had lost the true religion; and all those nations and ages would be left to everlasting anarchy and confusion, till God brought the true religion among them.

X. And on the other hand, if the authority of every civil government extended to direct the affairs of religion, and that by God's appointment; then every government would have a right to determine what shall be the religion of that society or nation; and by this means, as the true religion is professed by very few civil governments in comparison of the multitudes of false religions, there would be an obligation from God on the greatest part of mankind to submit to their governors when they enjoin a false religion, and receive and practise it instead of the true, which is too absurd a thing to be supposed.

SECTION II.

THE NECESSITY OF ACKNOWLEDGING A GOD, AND THE RELIGION OF AN OATH.

I. Though religion, so far as it relates to the salvation of our souls and a future world of happiness, doth not come within the cognizance of civil government; yet as the affairs of men are situated in this world under all governments, there are several things relating to our civil welfare which seem to require the knowledge and profession of a God; as these four, for instance: 1. Witnessing in controversies between two parties. 2. Information in criminal cases. 3. Security against secret plots and mischiefs from the people. 4. Guarding against oppression and injustice of the rulers. Let us consider each of these distinctly.

1. The case of "witnessing in controversies between two contending parties, requires the acknowledgment of a God." Partly through the ignorance of men, and partly through their evil inclinations, there will be controversies frequently arising among the people, which must be determined by the magistrate, as a judge of right and wrong. Now in order to search into the truth of things, and the right of particular persons, it is not thought proper for the magistrate usually to give credit to any persons in their own cause, when there is no concurrent witness or witnesses who declare the same thing.

And whereas witnesses in many disputes about property may justly be suspected to warp from the truth through private influences, if there be no other person who can detect and discover them, therefore it is necessary they should have some knowledge, and make some profession of an invisible Power, who made and governs the world, who sees, and hears, and knows every thing which is done among men, and who is a guardian of justice and truth, and some time or other will terribly punish falsehood and lying.

2. "The case of information against criminals requires some profession of a God." Let it be considered, that whatsoever injuries or frauds, crimes or mischiefs, are

practised or committed in any nation under these governments, they cannot be punished till those magistrates, who are executors of the laws, are informed of them; nor can such informers at all times be safely credited, because they may have no regard to truth in themselves, or they may be swayed by some evil bias, unless they have some knowledge or belief and reverence of a higher Power, who knows all truth, and will avenge falsehood.

3. "To secure a state against secret plots and mischievous designs of the people, requires the profession of a divine Being." There are many frauds and plots, and secret evil practices which tend to the injury of mankind, to the ruin of all government and peace in a nation, and yet they cannot perhaps be found out by the eyes of men soon enough to prevent the mischief intended. Therefore the belief and awful sense of some all-knowing and over-ruling Power is needful to guard the evil minds of men against contriving these secret mischievous practices; and the profession of this belief is a necessary band of common union and safety.

4. "The acknowledgment of a God is necessary to guard officers and rulers from oppressing the people." Magistrates or officers themselves may be easily inclined or tempted to neglect their duty to the people; they may be bribed or frightened to pass wicked and unjust judgments on men, or to commit grievous outrages and acts of violence upon them, if they have no knowledge nor belief of any superior Power, who rules the world, and will punish unfaithfulness, injustice, violence, oppression, and falsehood, in all ranks of his creatures, whether high or low, rich or poor.

II. In order therefore to a peaceful and successful government, and to the preservation of every man in his rights and liberties, it is necessary that both the governors and the subjects should acknowledge some God, that is, some superior invisible Power, who governs the world, who knows all secret things, and will punish those crimes or those acts of injustice or falsehood, either in the governor or the governed, which violate the common welfare of mankind, and which are committed in secret.

Whatever some witty persons have pretended, that a kingdom or state of atheists may be supported without any regard to a God or religion, it has huge and dreadful inconveniencies attending it, considering the wicked and perverse tempers and manners of men.

III. Now to secure a civil government in the execution of its proper designs, to secure the mutual fidelity of subjects and their governors, and to secure the truth of witnesses in matters of controversy, and in informations brought against any criminals, the bond of an oath is the ultimate resort of men: For an oath is a solemn appeal to a God, concerning the truth of what they declare; it is an appeal to some superior and invisible Power, who will avenge falsehood and perjury wheresoever it is practised, though it should not, or could not, be found out by the search of men.

And let it be observed that an oath, or an appeal to God concerning truth, always implies in it, that we hope for a blessing from this God upon our fidelity, if we speak the truth; but that we imprecate the vengeance of this God to fall upon us, if we knowingly speak what is false, or act contrary to our covenants or engagements.

IV. I would fain have it observed also yet further, that it will be a much more effectual means to secure mankind from perjury, and from every degree of falsehood or violation of an oath, if the oath were always administered by the magistrate with the utmost solemnity, and if the words in which an oath is formed did express the imprecation or

curse upon falsehood strongly and terribly, rather than if it expressed only the blessing upon truth and faithfulness. And I have often thought that one reason why there is so much perjury in our nation, and the religion of an oath has so little force upon the consciences of men, is because, in our common form, "So help me God," the blessing only is expressed, and the curse is concealed and only implied at a distance; so that very few who take the oath have such an awful sense of their transactions with an almighty avenging Power at such a season as they ought to have, for want of the plainer appearance of the imprecation, as well as for want of greater solemnity in the manner of administering and taking the oath.

I well remember in former years a gentleman, who was a justice of peace in the country, informed me that ignorant people would easily be persuaded by their neighbours to go to take their oath before him concerning particular facts, when they would not be persuaded to assert the same thing boldly with some terrible imprecation on themselves, of broken or withered limbs, if they did not utter the truth.

V. Upon the whole, it is necessary that the governors and governed should acknowledge and profess their belief and veneration of a God, that is, of some superior and invisible Power, who will punish perjury, and violence, and secret crimes against the welfare of mankind. And it seems a most proper and agreeable, if not a necessary thing, that each should be bound to the other, that is, the governors to the people, and the people to the governors, by the solemnity of an oath, to fulfil their mutual duties and engagements of protection and obedience. In Great Britain the kings are engaged hereto by their coronation-oath, and the people by the oath of allegiance.

The coronation-oath obliges the king to grant and keep and confirm to his people the laws and customs, &c. and also, to his power, to cause law, justice, and discretion in mercy and truth to be executed in all his judgments.

The oath of allegiance obliges the people to support the king in all his just rights and powers, so far as he can, doth, and will protect his subjects in their just rights and properties.

It is evidently a mutual contract, and both are bound to each other by this solemnity of an oath.

VI. It seems to me also very proper, that the outward ceremony or action which is used in swearing, whether it be lifting up the hand, or kissing the book, &c. be publicly and authoritatively declared, not to be designed as a religious ceremony, whereby we pay our invented honours to God in the act of swearing, but that it is used only as a civil gesture or sign, whereby we testify to the world that we do call God to witness to the truth of that we speak. Hereby we shall secure many scrupulous persons from the fear of taking an oath with that sign, lest they should thereby worship the great God by ceremonies invented by men, which many good subjects have thought unlawful. Or if they do still really and in conscience scruple any particular gesture or outward sign, or ceremony, their oath expressed in full and strong language should be taken without it.

VII. If any particular persons of known sobriety should declare solemnly, that from a principle of conscience they scruple the form of an oath, or a solemn appeal to God concerning the truth, I think they are bound to give some proper satisfaction to the government, that the form of words which they use in witnessing, in affirmations or promises, &c. shall be deemed in all respects equal to the obligation of an oath, *viz.* that their consciences are equally bound by it before God, and that they shall incur the

same penalties among men by the violation thereof. This will relieve the people that are called quakers, who will not take any oath: And indeed without some such security no person is fit to enjoy the privileges of civil government, nor to be a member of any state, who refuses to bind his truth by an oath.

VIII. And therefore if there be any person who thinks and believes that the obligation arising from an oath, or from such a solemn affirmation made before the civil powers, may be dissolved and nullified by any other power upon earth, such a person may be lawfully excluded from becoming a member of the state, or enjoying any of the privileges thereof; unless he can find some way or other that shall be justly satisfactory to the state, concerning his truth or fidelity to his neighbours and his governors. For where one party cannot, or will not, effectually oblige themselves to allegiance and fidelity, the other party is not bound to afford them civil protection and the privileges of the government. How far the papists are concerned in this matter, let others judge: But I shall have occasion to mention this hereafter.

IX. I will not stay here to debate whether it be necessary for this purpose of swearing for the uses of civil government, that men should acknowledge one single almighty Power, that is, the true God, in opposition to all false gods: For it is certain that some governments who worshipped idols or false gods, did believe that these invisible powers would punish injustice and fraud among men, and thereby did maintain and secure themselves, and made their nation tolerably peaceful and flourishing for years or ages. But this may be asserted with abundant evidence and truth, that the common acknowledgment of the one living and true God, both by princes and people, by the governors and governed, is by far the best and surest band of government and the common peace: But I shall have occasion to mention this also afterward.

SECTION III.

OF PUBLIC TEACHERS OF THE LAWS AND MORALITY.

I. As there are many social duties of the law of nature which regard the security of the lives and properties of men, for which all government is designed; such as honesty, justice, truth, gratitude, goodness to men, honour and fidelity to superiors, &c. so there are many crimes which are destructive to their properties or their lives, or to their whole government and peace; such as treason in all degrees, cheating, stealing, robbing, plundering, adultery, assaults, maiming, murder, and various other sorts of injuries to the bodies of men, to their known rights, powers, and privileges, as well as to their estates, their reputation, good name, and comfort: All which ought to be in the power of civil governments to forbid and restrain by proper laws; which laws should sometimes have proper rewards appointed for the innocent informers and assistants of the magistrates, but always penalties to be inflicted on the criminal.

II. There are also some personal duties of the law of nature, such as sobriety and temperance, frugality and industry; and there are sins against this law which relate primarily and chiefly to single persons, such as intemperance of every kind, gluttony, drunkenness, profuse and riotous living, universal idleness or neglect of labour among the poor, fornication, self-murder, &c. which, though they do not perhaps so sensibly,

directly, and immediately injure our neighbours, yet they are very pernicious to any state or government, inasmuch as they dispose men greatly to the commission of injuries against their neighbours, the violation of the rights of mankind, and the peace of society and government. These crimes seem therefore properly to lie under the cognizance and the restraints of the civil government.

III. Now as there are laws which are, or should be, made in every society for the preservation of the peace, and for supporting and carrying on the common welfare of the society; and as some of these laws should forbid those social crimes, such as cheating, stealing, murder, adultery, &c. and these personal crimes, idleness, drunkenness, &c. so it is necessary, in a well constituted government, that there should be some common appointed way of communicating the knowledge of these laws to the people, that they may be well apprized what is their duty and what they are forbid to practise. Surely the laws of a land should be made known to those who are to walk and live according to them, and who are to be punished for not keeping them.

And by the way, I wish I could give some sufficient reason why, when new laws are made in Great Britain by the three estates of the kingdom, there should not be as much care taken in a legal promulging them, or the substance of them, so far as concerns all private persons at least, through every city and town in the nation, as there is of publishing the mere will of the prince by royal proclamations, which must be read in every market town. Multitudes of people are as ignorant of the laws, as they would be of proclamations, if not published in this manner.

IV. And for the same reason, since the awful veneration of a superior invisible Power, that knows all things, and can punish falsehood and secret crimes, is necessary to government, there should be some care taken by the governors that the knowledge of this superior invisible Power should be some way proclaimed or propagated amongst all the subjects.

V. And though it is possible, as was hinted before, that the belief and acknowledgment of several gods, who are avengers of falsehood and secret mischief, may be consistent with the tolerable welfare and conveniencies of the state, yet it must be granted that polytheism, or the belief of many gods, hath so much absurdity in it, and is so contrary to the light of nature, that many inconveniencies may arise from it; and therefore it is highly proper that the existence and perfections, the providence and natural and moral government of the one true God, should be some way made known through the nation, together with the natural veneration or reverence that is due to him from al men.

VI. Whether the belief and profession of the one true God should be imposed on all the nation under any penalty, I leave others to determine. I rather think it should not; and for these three reasons:

Reason I. There may be many heathens who worship several gods, who yet may be useful members of the state; they may heartily agree to an original compact of government, and may seal it sincerely with an oath; they may dread the vengeance of their gods falling upon them for falsehoods, and may perhaps add great wealth and strength to a government or nation: Why then should they be utterly secluded from it?

If it be objected that no such persons as idolaters were permitted to live in the jewish state by the laws of God, Mr. Locke, in his admirable *Letters of Toleration*, has answered that difficulty, by shewing that the jewish government was a theocracy,

wherein God, even Jehovah, the one true God, was their political king, and therefore the acknowledgment of any other god was treason against the state; but it never was so in any other nation upon earth.*

Reason II. If the members of any state or government happen to be heathens or idolaters, or perhaps manichees, who believe two sovereign principles or powers, one of good, the other of evil, &c. they may be invited and inclined to hearken to the principles of true religion and Christianity, if they are not utterly discouraged by finding penalties laid upon their mistaken belief; and they might, by the same gentleness, continue their favourable opinion of us, and grow up, by degrees, into believers of the one true God. I might repeat the same thing concerning the heathen neighbours of such a state or government, and strangers who come to traffic with them. By seeing the gentleness and goodness of such a christian nation, they by degrees may attend to the gospel of Christ, and be converted and become his disciples, and may be allured to unite themselves, and their riches and powers, to support this government. Penalties may make dissemblers and hypocrites, but good Christians are not to be made this way.

Reason III. If it be allowed that polytheists should lie under any penalty by the law, for owning many gods, let us suppose a socinian or an arian a turk, or a deist, to be the supreme governor: May he not take it into his head to lay the same penalty on athanasians for owning and adoring three distinct, infinite, and almighty persons, of which the unitarian governor can perhaps get no other idea than that of three gods? We well know that the governments of this world are not wont of themselves to be too nice or too just in their distinction of theological matters, nor too ready to put a favourable construction on the sentiments of those who dare to differ from them. I fear the remonstrances made by the athanasians, drawn from a few theological or metaphysical distinctions, or from the Holy Bible itself, would not easily persuade the arian or socinian ruler, the turkish or deist governor, to make any saving difference between them and other polytheists: And thus the idolater with many gods, and the athanasian with his trinity, will fall under the same public penalties, how unjust soever such a sentence might be if thoroughly examined by christian principles.

VII. As those persons who are appointed by the government to teach the people the civil rules or statutes of the land, should be well instructed in them themselves, that as far as possible the people might never be led into a mistake in matters wherein their lives and properties are concerned; so, for the same reason, the persons that should be appointed by the state to instruct the people in the knowledge of a God, and the religion of an oath, and to acquaint them with the rules of these personal and social virtues, which are so necessary to good government; I say, these teachers should be themselves well instructed in the knowledge of God, and vice, and virtue, and be also to all appearance pious, and virtuous, and loyal, practising that reverence to God, and those civil and

* I would not willingly divert from my subject here, so far as to shew, that God was the proper political Lord and supreme King of the Jews, even after they had kings, as well as before. It was God himself who from time to time pointed out by inspiration, or by extraordinary providences, the judges who should rule them: It was God who pointed out their kings, as his deputies, in an immediate manner, as Saul, David, Solomon, who was one of David's younger sons, &c. It was God who divided the kingdom into two kingdoms, who by his prophets gave Jeroboam ten tribes, who cut off his posterity and anointed Jehu, and again cut off his posterity, and did what he pleased in altering the succession of their kings: Jehovah, the *Holy One of Israel*, who was their God, was also their King.

moral laws which they teach, that with more success they may instruct the people in these things which are of so much importance to their civil welfare and the preservation of the government.

VIII. As taxes are raised by the state, and customs and tributes of various kinds justly imposed by the government, in order to defray the public expenses, and to pay the public officers; so it seems reasonable that those public officers who are appointed to instruct the people in the knowledge of the laws of the land, and in the knowledge of these virtues and vices which affect the civil society, as well as in the knowledge of a God who will punish secret wickedness, and in the sacredness and solemnity of an oath, which is the bond of government; I say, it is reasonable that these public teachers should be paid or supported out of the civil list, if I may so express it, or the tribute raised for the support of civil government, since the support and peace of the civil government so much depends upon it.*

And perhaps we might venture so far as to say, that the preachers of natural religion, in all the more necessary and obvious doctrines and duties of it, which have so evident a connection with the civil prosperity and welfare of the state, may be lawfully maintained by the government out of the national tribute appointed to supply the civil list; but I affirm it not at present. I would speak with all just diffidence in things dubious.

SECTION IV.

OF THE PEOPLE'S ATTENDANCE ON THESE PUBLIC TEACHERS.

I. Now a question arises here, If there are public officers appointed to teach the laws of the land, and also to teach the things that relate to the knowledge of the true God, the religion of an oath, and those virtues and vices which concern the civil interests of the society; may not the supreme power likewise oblige the people at certain seasons to come and attend the lectures of these public teachers, supposing that these times and seasons are so wisely adjusted as not to interfere with the civil interests of mankind, or of that nation. To this I answer,

II. I see nothing in it inconsistent with the rights or just liberties of mankind: And upon this account I would ask, may not a christian prince appoint a certain hour of the first day of the week, which Christians esteem sacred, to be employed in hearing these lectures? And for the same reason, might not a jewish prince appoint some part of the last day of the week, which the Jews count sacred, for persons to hear such lectures? And a turkish prince appoint his lectures of the same kind upon a Friday, for the same reason?

III. And I might add further, that if the state judge it necessary, that one day in

* Long since this was written, I met with a particular appointment of such public sermons or instructions, to be given to the people in China, by their mandarins or governors of towns and provinces, on the first and fifteenth days of the month, which is actually practised by them there, as Père Du Halde gives us an account in his late *History of China*, Vol. I. page 53, where he enumerates all the sixteen texts given them by the emperor, to enlarge upon one or another of them, twice a month in public assemblies. Almost every one of them contains some moral virtue, and there is a specimen added of a sermon of a mandarin upon one of them. It may be observed indeed, as a defect in the choice of these subjects, that not one of them has any relation to their gods or religion, except that which orders the stifling of new sects, and I think is the only one that cannot be vindicated.

seven, or nine, or twelve, or twice in a month, people should be restrained from their usual labours in public, partly to give rest to the labouring part of a nation, both man and beast, and partly that they may be more at leisure for these public lectures in their regular course, I do not at present see any thing in it inconsistent with the just liberties of the people: Provided always, that the time or times appointed for such public lectures, are not so numerous, nor so large, as to hinder the common welfare of the people in their several particular employments, or to obstruct or prevent, or too much curtail and diminish religious services, or the necessary duties where conscience obliges each of them to pay special honours to the God they profess; of which hereafter.

IV. It is granted, indeed, that the Jews, so long as they were a nation under a distinct government of their own, were actually under a theocracy; God was their political head and their king; and therefore the civil and the religious concerns of that nation were more intermingled one with another in the same pages of the Bible; and the religious observation of certain days and times was appointed by God, as the particular governor of that land, as well as the universal Lord of conscience; which land was not very large in its whole extent. But these peculiarities of government cannot be applied to any other nation or people whatsoever; nor even to the Jews at present, who are now no united nation, but are abandoned by God their king, to be a scattered people throughout the earth.

Though nothing can be inferred from the special laws of the Jews, about days appointed for public worship under severe penalties, which would justify other magistrates in enacting such laws, yet the nature of the thing, if such lectures of civil and moral laws must be read, will certainly require certain times to be appointed for reading them, and attendance upon them. And therefore it will be absolutely necessary that such days, or hours at least, be legally settled by public authority, since the welfare of the state requires it.

V. It will be said, perhaps, that however these attendances are required by a law, it is not to be supposed they will be punctually performed, nor this law obeyed, unless there be some penalty annexed to the neglect. I acknowledge it, and therefore the penalty should in such cases be so wisely framed and limited, that it may not exceed the damage the public may be supposed to sustain by such a neglect.

As for the neglect of attending these public lectures, I fear it will hardly be esteemed a sufficient penalty, that persons by this neglect will continue ignorant of the laws moral and civil, and thereby be more exposed to incur the several penalties to which the breaking of those laws will subject them. If any other penalties be needful, let others propose them. I would be very cautious in appointing penalties, though a law has but small force without them.

VI. But it will be objected here, in opposition to any such penalties, since God only is the Lord of conscience, no government has any right or authority to impose any thing on the consciences of its subjects, which they solemnly declare or swear they believe to be unlawful or offensive to God, as shall be more particularly shewn afterward: Suppose then any persons should pretend their conscience does not permit them to attend upon these established moral lectures of the veneration due to a God, and the various civil duties to men, on those days or at those seasons that are appointed by the state for these lectures: As for instance, suppose a Christian in a turkish country

be appointed to attend on these public lectures on the Lord's-day, or Sunday, which he accounts sacred; or suppose a Jew should be required to give his attention to them on a Saturday, which is his sabbath; would not this be a violation of the rights of conscience, if this attendance on these established lectures were imposed with a penalty?

I must answer still, that conscience in things relating to God must not be imposed upon, nor can men be obliged to alienate sacred time to mere civil purposes, but where the real necessities of the state require it; and there I suppose God will not account it criminal to comply with the necessities of the state on his own sacred day; as for instance, to stop a flood, to quench a fire, or to repel an invasion.

And as the consciences of the subjects should not without necessity be imposed upon to hear these national statutes or civil lectures, where they think the sacred time is profaned hereby; so it is still more evident, that no person should be constrained against his conscience to be a reader of these civil lectures, who thinks either the reading itself, or the time of reading, to be unlawful or offensive to God. And I think it can never be supposed that the necessities of the state can be such, as to require those very persons to read these things who think it unlawful to do it. Surely others should do that office.

VII. Yet, if I may speak my most free and reasonable thoughts here, I can hardly believe the great God would account it a violation of some part of his appointed sabbath, whether Saturday or Sunday, to hear such lessons of morality and virtue, or lessons of the knowledge of God, and duty to him and to civil governors, which should be the chief substance of these lectures: For we find, even under the strictnesses of the jewish sabbatizing, our blessed Saviour himself went to a feast at the house of a pharisee; *Luke* xiv. 1; and he there taught them good manners and civility, as well as morality, *viz.* that "they should not sit down in the chief place, lest they should be removed with shame to some lower room." And it is certain that all the books of Moses were read in their synagogues on the sabbath-day, wherein now and then the laws of their civil government and rules of their civil life filled up whole chapters, and employed a considerable part of the time of their attendance. But we must remember, indeed, that God was their king, and therefore sacred and civil affairs were intermingled.

And if such days as some persons repute sacred should be appointed by the state for these lectures, perhaps it is proper that the Christians or the Jews in such a nation should be content to take other hours of the same Saturday or Sunday to worship their God upon his own appointed day, with what they suppose to be his own instituted forms or peculiar modes of worship: Always supposing, as before hinted, that the reading of the laws of the land, or rather short abstracts of them, take up but a small part of that time which is supposed to be sacred.

VIII. However, if any princes, or any governors would shew themselves to be fathers of their people, should they not, with all tenderness and care, appoint such times and seasons for these public and established lectures, as might not give offence to the consciences of any of their subjects, as far as possible? Nor should the penalties or very small fines for the absence of any of their subjects at such appointed seasons, exceed what a tender father would see necessary, for the welfare of the state, to inflict on his son, who would willingly serve and obey him in those things, which yet a mistaken conscience and his sense of duty to God hardly permit him to perform.

And in all these things let it be still observed and inviolably maintained, that no law should ever be enacted, nor any penalty of any kind established, but what appears necessary for the good of the state, or the public civil welfare; beyond which the authority of men in civil government cannot reach.*

SECTION V.

THE QUALIFICATIONS OF COMPLETE SUBJECTS OF THE STATE, AND OF THE MAGISTRATES THEREOF.

I. THUS far then we have proceeded, and it appears that the knowledge of a God, and of the duty of obedience to governors in civil things according to the laws of the land, together with moral duties that are necessary to the welfare of the community, and the support of government, ought to be taught to all the people; and I think the people ought to attend and learn something of them.

II. It must be always granted and allowed in all governments, that during the state of infancy or minority, every person born in the nation, and especially every child of a member of the community, is to be esteemed so far a member of it, as to receive protection from the government, upon the allegiance of its parents; and to enjoy all those privileges which a minor is capable of.

III. But what if we should suppose this membership, arising from his parents, together with the privileges thereof, should cease when he arrives at age? I inquire then, whether it may not be a very proper thing that every person, or at least every man, at the age of twenty-one years, should in some court of justice, or before some magistrate, be required by law to declare or profess this his veneration of a God, and his obedient regard to these moral and civil laws, which it is supposed he has learned in the great and general articles of them, so far as they are consistent with his duty to God; and this in order to become a personal partaker of the privileges of the government for the rest of his life, and to be made a complete member of the state?

Is it reasonable that any man should enjoy all the privileges of any society, who will not oblige himself to the general and necessary rules of the society? And would not such a law be more likely to persuade and constrain parents to take some care that their children should be acquainted with these things, which are so necessary to the welfare of mankind and of the state? And that they should have some tolerable knowledge of them before they arrive at the age of man, when the law calls upon them to become complete and personal subjects of the state?

IV. Does it not seem very necessary also, that all who are constituted magistrates or officers in the state, should not only profess these things at the time of their being invested in their office, but that they should also be persons, who to all appearance practise according to their profession? For how shall we suppose those persons will be fit guardians or executors of the civil or moral laws, who themselves manifest by

* *Note*, This Section, as well as this whole Treatise, was written a long time before the act about reading the law, made against the murderers of Captain Porteous in Scotland, was framed or thought of.

their practice that they have no regard to them? Is it not evident that a man who abuses the name of God by profane swearing and cursing, who is given to drunkenness or lewdness, cheating and lying, acts of violence and oppression, or any scandalous crime which interferes with the good of mankind and the welfare of a government; I say, is it not evident that such a man should never be made a magistrate or officer for the execution of the laws of the land? Is not this of vastly greater importance than to inquire into the speculative opinions of men, and their peculiar formalities of worship, in order to judge whether they should be made officers in the state?

V. Would there also be any unreasonable hardship, or any inconvenience in it, if such a civil officer, who is found guilty of the public violation of the civil or moral laws of the state, should be exposed to a double penalty upon the transgression of any of these moral or civil laws? Or sometimes perhaps, if the penalty be a fine, may it not be made tenfold, or more, according to the quality or character of such an offender? Would not this be a more powerful means of keeping both magistrates and people within the rules of virtue and public safety?

SECTION VI.

OF PUBLIC WORSHIP ON THE PRINCIPLES OF NATURAL RELIGION.

I. THOUGH we have already spoken concerning the veneration of a God as necessary in civil government, yet we have not hitherto considered any special act of religion to be performed towards him, besides the religion of an oath.

It comes now to be inquired, whether the acknowledgment of a God in a sufficient manner to answer the purposes of civil government, does not also imply and demand some public veneration or worship to be paid to him at certain seasons, that the world may see, as far as outward actions can manifest it, that we believe and reverence a divine Power? This was supposed to be so necessary to the establishment of a state upon proper foundations, that Mr. Locke, that great patron of liberty, in the laws which he drew up for Carolina, appointed, that no man should have any estate or habitation in it, that does not acknowledge a God, and that this God is publicly and solemnly to be worshipped. Article 95.

II. Now the most natural, obvious, and necessary parts of worship, are praise and adoration of this God, on account of his powers and perfections, the invocation of him by prayer for the blessings we stand in need of, and thanksgiving for the blessings we have received, acknowledging all that we have, even our being and our comforts, to be derived originally from him.

III. May not then every civil government appoint certain persons to offer up public prayers and praises unto the great God, at certain stated seasons, and require the attendance of the people on this worship, since this is an act of natural religion, and some public worship seems necessary for every subject of the state to approve himself a believer in a God? I answer,

It is difficult to find how this may be done in any nation, without intrenching upon the liberty of mankind, and imposing upon the consciences of some of the inhabitants of the land; and that for these reasons:

IV. *Reason* 1. First, It has been already granted that all the people or inhabitants

of the land may not have learned to acknowledge the one true God, and if they happen to be heathens or polytheists, they may think it hard to be constrained by a magistrate to worship, as the athenians did, an *unknown God*, Acts xvii. 23, at least till they have been all so far taught and instructed as to know, believe, and profess the *true God* alone.

V. *Reason* II. Again, If the one true God, be thus publicly worshipped merely according to the dictates of the light of nature, there may be several sects in the nation who may think it necessary to worship him with the addition or mixture of their peculiar rites and ceremonies, which they suppose divine, whenever they come before him; and therefore they should never be compelled to attend this mere natural worship. Christians would say, they are particularly required to worship the true God, in the name and by the mediation of Jesus Christ, according as our Lord has taught them, John xiv. 6, *No man cometh to the Father but by me.* John xvi. 24, *Hitherto ye have asked nothing in my name, ask and ye shall receive.* And St. Paul tells us, that whatever we do, and especially in divine worship, of which he is there speaking, it should be all in the name of Christ; Col. iii. 17, *Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.* Now a Christian may think it unlawful to come and worship even the one true God together with the deists, and to join with them in those prayers and praises which are not offered in the name of Christ, or by his mediation, and therefore he should never be constrained to attend this natural worship by any penalty.

VI. *Reason* III. I know not how far it may be supposed to alleviate this difficulty, and make the conscience of every Christian more easy, to tell him, that there are many parts of worship paid to God in christian churches without the actual use of the name of Christ. Do we not sing David's Psalms? Do we not repeat the Lord's-prayer? And if it be lawful to address God by several of these psalms or this prayer, wherein there is not the least mention of the name or mediation of Christ, may we not join with the natural religion and worship of deists in their prayers and praises, supposing that all their expressions be conformable to what reason and the light of nature dictate; which the christian religion always presupposes and confirms?

VII. *Reason* IV. If it shall be said here, that when God is worshipped by jewish psalms, or by the Lord's-prayer, Christians do, or should, in their own mental meditations join the name of Christ and his mediation to these addresses to God; may it not be said also, that the same mental meditations may join the name and mediation of Christ to all these public and national invocations and adorations of God performed according to the light of nature?

VIII. *Reason* V. If this might be allowed, there would be then indeed a sort of natural religion, which is the foundation of all true revealed religion, which might be taught universally to all the people, which might be practised and established through the nation, and perhaps be supported by the state: But still I fear the universal attendance on worship could not be commanded under any penalty, because all christian people will not, or cannot, satisfy their consciences with the salvo proposed; and perhaps other sects may dislike it too upon the same foundation.

IX. *Reason* VI. And besides, many persons may find their consciences dissatisfied with the men whom the state shall choose to offer up their social worship to God; they may be dissatisfied with other expressions or other omissions in the public worship, or in

the appointed forms thereof, besides those which I have mentioned; they may be also dissatisfied to have communion in worship with a congregation of deists, or with mere unitarian worshippers, if they profess the holy Scripture and the Trinity. Many sects may declare their consciences are really dissatisfied with this worship, because all men are bound to offer their best unto God, and they would complain that such mere natural worship is far below the best that they could offer; now the state has no power to compel the consciences of men to join in that worship of God which they dislike or disapprove as unworthy of him, or unacceptable to him, provided that they do every thing else that is necessary to become faithful members of the state.

SECTION VII.

OF PARTICULAR RELIGIONS SUPPOSED TO BE REVEALED.

I. SUPPOSING that some public worship must be authoritatively required or maintained in a state, for the welfare of the state itself, let us inquire further then how it is possible to be done without infringing natural liberty?

Besides the general principles of natural religion, which seem reasonable and proper to be made known to all the people, as has been before declared, there may be several particular sects in the nation, both among the governors and governed, who have other special articles of faith, and other peculiar rules of practice or worship, ceremony or sacrifice, over and above these natural and moral doctrines or duties. And these peculiarities of religion are believed to come to them by a revelation from the God they worship, or from men who were taught of God, which is much the same.

II. Now if public worship must be maintained, every man would choose to do it in his own way: And every man, both governor and governed, ought to have full liberty to worship his God in that special way and manner which his own conscience believes to be of divine appointment, or which he thinks to be most necessary, in order to secure the special favour of his God and his own future happiness. This is a personal obligation which natural conscience, or the light of reason, which is "the candle of the Lord" within us, lays on every individual person among mankind; supposing always that this peculiar religion does not break in upon the just rights or the peace of our neighbours. And indeed if it does unjustly invade their peace, or their natural or civil rights, this seems to be sufficient evidence that it does not come from God, who is the original author and supreme guardian of the natural rights of his creatures: Nor will any wise and righteous government indulge such mischievous pretences of conscience or divine revelation; though in any other case, I see not that any governors have a right to forbid it.

III. The great God, who gave us all reason and conscience, never appointed the conscience, nor the reason, nor the will of one man absolutely to appoint the religious duties of another; except always in case of infancy, where conscience or reason is not grown up to its proper exercise, and parents are entrusted with the education and the religion of their children till they can learn for themselves the knowledge of God and their duty to him.

The fantom or chimera of an universal conscience, given by God himself to all supreme ruling powers, for the authoritative guidance and sway of the ruled in every nation in

religious affairs, is so poor and sorry a pretence, and is big with such absurdities, that it is now banished out of the books and opinions of every nation where liberty is known; nor should it ever be recalled or revived, lest God, as the author of all civil government, should be made the author and commander of all that idolatry and superstition, which the governors of this world may command.

IV. Where persons therefore profess the obligations of conscience to any revealed religion, and claim the right of worship which arises thence, it must always be granted; but still with this proviso, as was said before, that none of these pretences to divine revelation, none of these peculiar forms or practices, to which men profess to be bound by their consciences, be inconsistent with the peace of the state, the welfare of their neighbours, and the support of the civil government: For it is not to be supposed that the great God would ever reveal and appoint any thing to be believed or practised as a matter of religion, by creatures who must dwell under some civil government, which should be inconsistent with civil government itself, or the common and social welfare of mankind.

For this very reason it is that no religion hath a right to be tolerated which professes and maintains the persecution of other religions, or which binds down persons under penalties to act in the things of God contrary to their consciences; because this is injurious to mankind in general, and invades the just and natural liberties of men, and thereby breaks in upon the peace of the state.

And for the same reason, no person, whatsoever religion he professes, can claim toleration for himself in the practice of it, who asserts and maintains a right to persecute other religions besides his own: Such a person is a common nuisance to a state, for his principles are inconsistent with the peace of civil society: And besides, what reason can he have to claim that toleration for himself which he refuses to others?

V. Where particular persons of the same religion shall unite in societies for religious purposes, with this proviso of the safety of the state, there the state has not only no right nor authority to forbid them, but the rulers of the state are obliged to guard and protect them from insults and injuries in the enjoyment of all their natural liberties and these invaluable rights of conscience; and they are obliged by their office to maintain these rights of their people, in opposition to all the public scandal and outrage with which persons of different religions might be tempted to treat each other: For all magistrates are guardians of the peace of the state, and of all the natural rights and liberties of mankind, in things relating to God or man. The great rule is happily expressed by our Saviour, Matt. xxii. 21, *Render unto Cæsar, the things which are Cæsar's, and unto God, the things that are God's.* The peace of the state, and its civil welfare belongs to Cæsar, and he is to be honoured and supported by proper tribute for this purpose; but conscience belongs only to God, and no Cæsar on earth hath any right to invade it.

VI. Nor has any civil ruler whatsoever any right to require or command the people to profess and practise that peculiar religion which he himself professes, under any penalties, because the peculiarities of this or of any other sect of religion, are not necessary for the good of the state. A man may be in all respects as useful and valuable a member and supporter of the state, though he profess and practise such a peculiar religion as is very different from what the rulers profess or practise, and in some respects, perhaps contrary to it.

VII. Whatsoever sects or societies of men agree together in any of these supposed revealed religions, or any religious ceremonies, forms, or practices, which their consciences think necessary, they must agree also upon particular times and places for their peculiar exercises of public worship; and they must support and maintain the expenses of them out of their own personal property, or at their own charge.

VIII. But, that the state may take no umbrage or suspicion at the religious assemblies of persons who differ from the religion of the rulers, as though they were designed for seditious purposes; and that every person may secure his full freedom to exercise his own peculiar religion according to his conscience without disturbance; it may be proper, if not necessary, that wheresoever ten, or twelve, or twenty persons, more or less, shall agree upon such a special or peculiar religion, and fix a place for their worship, they shall give notice of it to some public magistrate or public court, and let their religion and their place be registered, under some particular name, which they shall choose for themselves.

Mr. Locke is so much of this mind, in two or three articles of his laws drawn up for Carolina,* that he hardly thinks any person fit for the protection of the state and all the civil privileges thereof, if his name be not registered at seventeen years of age in some one or other worshipping society: I beg leave indeed to query, whether seventeen years are an age of sufficient discretion for every young person to determine that point? Perhaps the age of one-and-twenty may be early enough.

IX. As places must be agreed upon for social worship, so also must the time. Now suppose the time which some particular sects agree upon for their exercises of religion are believed by them to be made sacred for worshipping by divine appointment, such as Friday of the Turks, Saturday of the Jews, and Sunday of the Christians; and suppose these very days, or part of these days, should be appointed by the state for some civil purposes; as for instance, if in a heathen or a turkish government the people should be required to appear at a public market, or at a court of justice, for witnesses or jury-men, or for a public taxation, or for exercise of the militia, on a Saturday or Sunday; surely I think the state could not be censured and made criminal for appointing such a day for these purposes, unless they did it on purpose to distress any of their subjects.† But what must a Jew or a Christian do in such a case? Or what penalties may the state enact for the neglect of obedience to this law? I answer, in the first place,

X. *Answer* I. That if the thing required be an action really and plainly necessary for the present and immediate welfare and preservation of the state or country, the Jew or the Christian might innocently comply with the call of the state in a christian or in a jewish country, and then it is certainly lawful to do the same in Turkey; as for instance, the repelling of an invasion, the stopping of a general inundation, the quenching of fire, and the preservation of lives from imminent destruction. This is allowed on all hands, and is not esteemed a criminal profanation of sacred time.

* These few articles are the only things I consulted while I was drawing up this Essay.

† I think the state could not be made criminal for appointing such a day for civil affairs, which some or other of their subjects may count sacred, unless they did it on purpose to distress their people, because there may be seven religions professed among all the numerous inhabitants of a land, and each of these may claim a distinct day of the week as sacred: What, must these civil affairs then have no one day appointed for the transaction of them, because every day that could be named would interfere with the professions or pretences of some sect or other?

XI. *Answer* II. But if the scrupulous subjects see no such necessity in the case, for the preservation of the state, or the welfare and lives of men, or if the state command such actions as may be really necessary in themselves, but which are not necessary at that particular time, and which in their opinion would criminally profane the days that the Jews or Christians call holy; then it seems proper and necessary that the Jew should preserve his Saturday, as well as the Christian his Sunday, sacred for rest and divine worship, as preferring "obedience to God rather than men:" And I think he must consequently submit to such penalties as the state thinks necessary for the public welfare. I see not how this can be avoided. The state must be the judge.

XII. The state therefore in such cases, as I said before, ought to enjoin no other penalty for such neglects, than a wise and tender father would impose upon a child who loves and honours him, when he is constrained to neglect some part of his father's commands in order to obey God and his conscience: And the penalty or forfeit of each man for neglect in such a case, must necessarily be small, when it is measured by and adjusted to the detriment which it is supposed the state may receive from each single person's absence or neglect of the required hour and civil service appointed by the state. Or if the penalty should be reduced a little below the detriment the state can be supposed to sustain by the neglect, I think it would not be amiss, since it is an expression of tenderness to the consciences of good men, who are in all respects faithful and obedient to the state.

XIII. *Answer* III. And after all, every private person must be left to his own conscience, to judge or determine how far the action required by the state would profane the day which he calls sacred, and whether God calls him to comply with the orders of state, or to refuse it, and submit to the penalty: Always supposing that the Christian should not entirely neglect the public worship of God on a Sunday, nor the Jew on a Saturday; but, as far as possible, should choose those hours for the worship of God, which are best suited to the conveniency of the state and the general ease of those of his own sect: Nor do I think in such cases God would be found a rigorous or hard master.

XIV. And perhaps this may be one reason why the institution of the christian sabbath, or Sunday, is not so plain and express in the New Testament, nor the rules of the observation of it so evident, nor so strict and particular, as the sabbath of the Jews, *viz.* because the church of Christ being to be raised up in all nations, the consciences of young Christians might be put under too severe a bondage in some places, where the demands of the state might greatly interfere with the religion of the Sunday; especially if the peculiar obligations to keep the day were so very strict, and the prohibitions were so severe as was enjoined to the Jews.

XV. Yet still I think it must be granted, if we would keep up any serious sense of religion and the returns of public worship, one day in seven is little enough in general to be devoted to that purpose, which both the Jews and Christians believe to be divinely appointed.

XVI. As for the times and places of public worship in general, the magistrate has certainly so much to do in them, as not to suffer assemblies, under pretence of religion, to meet in such places and at such times, as may give any just and reasonable umbrage to the state, that sedition or gross immoralities are practised there.

And if any society should think fit to keep their assemblies in caves, and lurking holes

at midnight, the magistrate may always demand an officer to be present with such assemblies, to take care that the state received no damage, and that morality and peace be preserved in the state: Or perhaps he may generally suppress such meetings, in such places and seasons, where there is just and evident reason for suspicion of such wicked practices, notwithstanding all pretences of conscience: For I am persuaded the great God, the Author of all civil society and government, will never require any such sort of worship, nor at such times or places, as shall endanger the peace and welfare of cities and nations.

Let but rulers allow such liberty for worship, as God and nature demand, there will be no ground for any body to seek such places or times for social worship, as can give just umbrage to any state or government.

SECTION VIII.

OF A PARTICULAR RELIGION PROFESSED BY THE RULING POWERS.

I. Another question arises here. If the supreme power of the state or civil government professes some particular revealed religion, or worships the great God with some peculiar modes and ceremonies of its own, may not the rulers of the state authorise and appoint men to be public teachers of their own religion in all the forms and ceremonies thereof? And may not these men celebrate these ceremonies by public authority, and lead others into the worship of their God according to these special forms and ceremonies? And may not the rulers appoint these teachers, or priests, to be paid out of the public revenue, or by tithes, &c. that is, tenths or twelfths of the improvement of the land, or by any taxes imposed by the government? To this I answer,

II. *Answer.* That every governor, every teacher, and every single person seems to have a natural right and liberty not only to practise their own religion themselves, but to persuade as many as they can to worship the God they worship, and that in and by their own approved forms. If duty to God should not require it, benevolence and love to our neighbours will incline men to this: But we must attempt it so far only as reason and persuasion can prevail, without any compulsion or force, for conscience and religion must be ever free: Whatsoever is done by mere compulsion or terror of men is not hearty and voluntary, and therefore it is not religion, and can never be pleasing to the great God.

III. But I cannot yet see any sufficient reason why a state should appoint the peculiarities of any revealed religion, or the special rites and ceremonies of any particular worshippers, or the men who celebrate them, to be supported at the public charge: For these peculiarities are not necessary to the preservation of the state, nor to the common outward civil welfare of a people; and I think the power of the magistrate reaches no further.

Nor will I venture to say that taxes, or tenths, or twelfths, or any subsidy, should be raised by the state for any other end, than the civil welfare of the state requires. If a heathen prince impose a tenth penny on all his subjects, as a tax to maintain heathen worship, would a Christian willingly pay it, and think himself bound in conscience to do it?

Is not this evidently the reason, why the people called quakers in our nation, at home or abroad, refuse to pay the tithes to the clergy of the church of England, or of other

christian churches, because they preach and practise many things in religion which the quakers do not believe, which the light of nature and reason does not dictate, and which are not necessary to the outward and civil welfare of mankind.*

IV. But it may be further inquired here, May not those teachers or publishers of the civil laws, or the moral duties of natural religion, which are before allowed to be paid out of the civil list, that is, by taxes on the people; I say, may not these men take an opportunity, when the people are met to hear civil and moral lectures, at the same time to instruct the people in the knowledge of the peculiar religion of their governors, and exhort them to comply with the rites and ceremonies thereof, and to join with them in their practice? To this I answer, as before,

V. *Answer.* That it does not appear plain to me, that taxes of any kind should ever be imposed on the people, in order to encourage and maintain the peculiar ceremonies or sacrifies, preachings or ministrations of any supposed revealed religion, beyond what is natural, or what is necessary for the state. Such taxes may, perhaps with as much justice, be imposed to maintain any other expensive or curious and capricious humours of a prince, which have no relation to the civil welfare or to religion.

And besides, this imposition of such a tax might give a disgust to some of the people, who profess a very different religion, and hinder or discourage them from coming to hear the laws of the land, and lectures of moral virtue, which the state requires to be published and taught at that time and in that place. Would not a christian subject, under a pagan or mahometan prince, think it hard to be required to hear lectures of the Alcoran, and of Mahomet's follies, or of the reveries of the heathen priests and poets, of Mars, Bacchus, Apollo, Diana, &c. from week to week, instead of moral or civil laws? And perhaps their consciences might be much offended at it, and they might be tempted to neglect their attendance on, and acquaintance with the civil and moral laws, if they are mingled in the same lecture with Alcorans and Talmuds, and Homer's Hymns to the rabble of heathen gods.

VI. Yet I think this may be allowed, that at the end of the moral or civil lectures, the magistrate, when an assembly is gathered, may appoint the lectures, or exercises, or celebrations of his own peculiar religion to follow them, provided the people have notice of it, and as many as please are permitted to depart without penalty or reproach: And provided always the preacher is not paid out of the public money, for any thing he does over and above these moral or civil lectures, which are needful for the good of the state.

VII. And it is certain, this further allowance may be made, *viz.* that as any rich man may at his own private expense, or out of his own property, maintain poets, philosophers, singers, teachers, or priests, to preach and practise the doctrines and ceremonies of his own peculiar religion, provided they teach and act nothing inconsistent with the welfare of the state; so a prince, or supreme power, may maintain teachers of the mathematics, philosophers, poets, star-gazers, or priests and preachers of his religion, out of that part of his possession or revenue which is properly his own, or his personal property, and is

* I do not by any means here pretend to vindicate the refusal of tithes and dues to the church in our nation; for they are to be considered as a civil or national tax or incumbrance, belonging to every piece of land or house bought or rented, and so appointed by our laws; and therefore every man knowingly buys or hires his land or his house with this incumbrance fixed on it, and belonging to those whom the state appoints to receive and possess it. But in the first fixing or erecting a civil government, of which I am speaking throughout this Essay, one would not choose to have such laws made, or such taxes or incumbrances established at first, which would afford any colour and occasion for such a refusal or disobedience, in times to come, as may arise from real scruples of conscience.

designed for the support of himself and family and common equipage, even though it may be allotted him by the state or the laws of the land.

For, if there ought to be a toleration of all religions which interfere not with the good of the state, and private persons may support the teachers and priests of their own religion out of their own property, I see no sufficient reason why the supreme power, or the governor, should be debarred from the same privilege; and as he is supposed to be richer than any of the people, so he may maintain more priests or preachers of his own religion than others can.

And this practice might be so managed by the governing powers of any nation, if they are christian, and truly zealous for their religion and their Saviour, that would not in the least break in upon human liberty, and yet might give very great countenance and encouragement to Christianity, and assist in spreading it through all the nation by degrees; or indeed any other religion for which the ruling powers are zealous.

I add also, that a religion thus professed and practised and supported by the beneficence of a prince, or supreme powers, may be in some sense called an established religion, because it is supported by the rulers above and beyond any other form of religion.

VIII. But suppose the supreme and legislative powers of any state should join the revenue, or taxes, which they raise for the public support of government, with that revenue which they allow the prince for his private or domestic expense and his royal equipage, so that they are not distinguished: Has not the prince then a much larger power in his hands to promote his own peculiar religion by money, whether it be pagan, turkish, or christian? So far as I can see, it may be answered thus:

IX. *Answer.* Surely the legislative powers, by mingling the revenues for the support of the government, with that of the domestic expense and equipage of the prince's family and court, have put it very much into the power and will of the prince, to lay out more or less money yearly for the maintenance and honour of his person, his court, and his family, as he shall see fit; always provided that the welfare, and honour, and offices of the state suffer no detriment, but have a full allowance made for them.

In the same manner we may reason about the expenses employed in buildings, paintings, mathematic sciences, or any of his own curiosities, or for the support of his own peculiar religion. If he maintain the necessary officers of the state in proper dignity, and keep up the necessary honours of his own court and household, as the dignity of his post requires, he has a liberty to save more money, by prudence and thriftiness, for any lawful diversions, or buildings, or philosophical experiments, or the practice and propagation of his own religion, &c. I say, he may save so much more of his revenue for such purposes and practices, than if these civil expenses were distinctly settled and limited by distinct parts of the revenue appropriated to each.

X. But if many of the people should be of a different sect, and should find that the prince saves and withholds too much money from the uses of the state and his public honour, and that he expends too much upon the practice and propagation of a religion which they disapprove, it is possible they may grow uneasy and murmur at the largeness of their taxes imposed on them, which they daily observe to be spent, not in civil government, but in propagating a disagreeable religion: And in this case every such prince must be left to his own prudence, to judge how far his zeal to promote any peculiar religion, by such large and constant expenses, should be indulged to the dissatisfaction of his subjects.

SECTION IX.

OF A RELIGION ESTABLISHED AMONG THE RULERS AND OFFICERS OF THE STATE.

I. After all our inquiries, we have not hitherto found any one religion, whether natural or revealed, or pretending to revelation, which can be authoritatively established by the state through all the nation, and by that authority can justly demand or require the attendance and compliance of all the people under any penalty. Let us see then whether some one religion may not be established among all the ruling powers, and demand the attendance of the supreme and subordinate magistrates and officers of the land? And this would be some sort of established religion.

II. I inquire here then, in the first place, Whether the supreme power or powers, or legislators of the state, may not make laws, which shall constitute and require the religion which he or they profess, to be practised by all who are admitted to the civil and military offices thereof; and whether such a law may not rightfully exclude all persons who refuse to comply with this religion?

Some are entirely of this opinion; and the reason given for it is this: Surely every master in a family may refuse to take any servant who is not qualified as he requires; as for instance, one who does not believe the Bible, one who cannot speak French or Dutch, one who is not willing to wear his livery, or who scruples to take an oath. Here is no injury done to any person whatsoever; for no man has a right to come into another man's house or family, and be made his servant, or to enjoy any post in his household, but by his appointment or order. Now military and civil officers in the state are but as servants in a great family; and no hurt is done to any subject in their natural or civil rights or properties, if they are constantly continued as subjects under the protection of the ruling powers, though they are not made officers or rulers in the state, because they have no right to it. To this inquiry I would make the following answers:

III. *Answer* I. It is granted that a master of a family has a right to take or exclude what persons he thinks proper for the service and welfare of his own private house, for they were not members of his family before they were taken into it: So the ruling power may choose what persons and what officers he pleases for his own household, his personal affairs, his guards, and his own public equipage and honour, without any injury done to other persons, who never had any pretence, by station or merit, to be received into the royal household or the guards, as a part or member thereof. But the officers of a state, or magistrates of the country, stand in a very different character from the servants in a family, because every subject is already a member of the state, and if he has behaved well therein, he should at least stand capable of the preferments and offices of his own country, as what he has merited by his good character and behaviour, as a subject in that state of which he is a part or member: Nor is it reasonable or just, that a capacity of preferment should be taken from him by law, but for some civil crime or misdemeanor, because such an incapacity, fixed by law, is a public reproach, or civil punishment. I answer, in the second place:

IV. *Answer* II. That it is possible the supreme ruling power may at present profess a different religion from almost all the people, or may fall into such different sentiments,

and then surely it doth not seem to be reasonable or fair to confine all inferior magistrates or officers to the religion of the supreme ruler, and to forbid the people ever to have any ruling officer among them, who is of their own religion, or to bind down all the officers, who must keep the people under due regulation and observance of the laws, to a peculiar religion which the bulk of the people dislike, and perhaps abhor. Would not this universal separation and opposition of religions, probably beget such a strangeness and ill-will between the rulers and the ruled, as might in a great measure endanger those bonds of union and love, and mutual good offices, which should be always reciprocally maintained between the rulers and the ruled? Would it not tend to provoke the people to sedition? And can it be ever esteemed true policy to follow such a conduct, as would bring such undesirable and dangerous consequences with it? I answer, thirdly:

V. *Answer* III. By way of concession. When the supreme ruling powers and far the greatest part of the people are of one and the same religion, I think it cannot be unlawful, nor is it improper, for them generally to choose the subordinate ruling officers out of those persons who are of the same religion with the prince and the people: And while things continue so, there may seem to be good reasons for this conduct in the present disposition of human affairs. It may help to secure and establish union and love, and unanimity and mutual respect, between the rulers and ruled, in any government: Which is of great importance to the welfare of the state.

But if there be a very considerable number of the people professing any other religion, I query whether it can be political wisdom to exclude them from every public office absolutely and universally, without exception? And it may be another query, whether it be an instance of wise conduct in any such nation, to make a law which shall incapacitate a man to be an officer in the state, merely because he professes a different religion; which difference, in truth, hath nothing to do with civil government? Nor can it be proper to put such a man under a perpetual disability by the sentence of a law, who is wise and good, who is strictly faithful to the state, who is acceptable to the people, and hath great personal merit and fitness to supply a vacant post of profit or honour?

And it may be said yet further, that in some constitutions of government, the towns and cities, and particular districts and divisions, may have a right to choose their own officers; and must a man of such an excellent character as I have described, and who is much desired by all the inhabitants, be rendered useless in government, merely because his conscience obliges him to worship God in another manner than the prince does? And should the people be for ever deprived of their ancient right to choose such a person into office, and enjoy the benefit of his talents and virtues?

However, it is evident, that if a particular religion be professed by the people and their governors, both supreme and subordinate, it may be well enough called the national religion, since the greatest part of the nation profess the same religion with the supreme power in it, and generally all the subordinate powers profess it also; though if it be not established under any legal requirements and penalties, some persons may doubt, whether it can be so well pronounced an established religion in the full propriety of the words. In the fourth place, I answer:

VI. *Answer* IV. Suppose a whole nation, both rulers and people, should agree in the present age so far, as actually to have no magistrates or officers, supreme or sub-

ordinate, chosen or appointed, but who profess such a peculiar religion as they themselves profess; yet considering that we are all fallible creatures, and that our knowledge is very imperfect, and our opinions are very changeable; considering also that the changes and revolutions of human affairs, and the situation of them, are very various; I query whether it be a piece of wisdom in any state, to make such laws, like the Medes and Persians, which shall never be altered in all times to come. Who knows what future occurrences may arise, wherein it may be necessary for a state to do that in one age for its own preservation and advantage, which was not proper in former years? And who knows, what further views may arise in the minds of the ruling powers, through longer observation and experience, which may shew them how reasonable it is to repeal laws that have been formerly made, though at that time they might generally be thought necessary? Surely it can be no piece of wisdom for a person, or a family, or a kingdom, by any present resolution or law to preclude themselves, and their posterity for ever, from all possible advantages that might arise from the change or repeal of it in future times. In the last place:

VII. *Answer* V. I would make the supposition, that the present religion, both of prince and people, is heathen idolatry, and then I would make these few queries following, *viz.*

Query I. If such a law had been made in every nation, in the days of heathenism, to exclude all but heathens and idolaters from public posts, I query whether the government of all the european, as well as eastern nations, must not have continued for ever heathen? And whether any secular power or government in Europe, could ever have regularly become Christian? Now surely it would be hard to say, that that could have been an equitable law which should for ever exclude a christian prince from the throne in every nation of Europe, and forbid christian officers ever to have been established amongst them.

Query II. Whether the understanding and conscience of prince or people who made such a law, might not in time gain further light and knowledge, so as actually to cast off their old heathen religion, since the light of conscience ought to be obeyed? But must every one of them lose their present civil rights by this their increase of knowledge and obedience to God and conscience? Must the prince, if he turn Christian, lose all his authority, or the officers their civil or military power, merely because they have forsaken idolatry, and worshipped "the one true God through Jesus Christ;" still supposing, that all of them are faithful to fulfil their present posts in the state, and all their duties to it?

The absurdity of this would yet more abundantly appear, if the bulk of the people were become Christians too, and longed for a christian magistrate. What, must both people and prince be eternal slaves to such a law, which their ancestors made in the time of ignorance? Must a christian people for ever be obliged to have heathen magistrates, because their heathen ancestors once made such a law? Surely the very light of nature teaches us that the prince and the people may join to reverse such a law, whensoever they feel the mischief and slavery that attends it; and would they be wise to try the same experiment again, when they have once felt the inconvenience and bondage of it?

Query III. May not some excellent persons be found, who are fit for any post or office in the government, whether supreme or subordinate, who may profess the gospel

of Christ, and thus differ from the heathen religion which is established by this law? Persons, I say, whom the people themselves would wish to be their rulers and governors, and persons who by the constitution have as much right to it as any others, excepting only their peculiar religion?

In an elective government, why should the people be forbid to choose such supreme governors among them, only because they are Christians? And why should the supreme power, in any kingdom or government whatsoever, be forbid to make the fittest persons he can find, officers in the army and the state, merely because they are Christians? Or, if particular cities, or towns, or counties have a right by the constitution to choose their own magistrates or officers, why should they be hindered from enjoying the benefit of such magistrates as are supposed to be wisest and fittest, merely because they profess Christianity? Can this be for the welfare of the state, which the rulers and the ruled are all bound to consult? Can it be any advantage to a state to have worse officers chosen into any post, supreme or subordinate, and to have much fitter persons rejected, and that merely because they hold some christian opinions and practices, which have nothing to do with the state any further than to teach and incline all men, in all stations, to make mankind more safe and happy?

VIII. Thus far may be argued, if the religions are entirely different in the very foundations and substance of them, as the heathen and the christian. But if the religions in contest be very nearly the same, and differ only in some circumstantials, there can never be so much reason why there should be so great a difference made between them in the disposal of public offices of trust or profit; for the dangers of any kind that can arise from such promiscuous officers is not so great or formidable. This, therefore, in such inquiries should always come into the consideration.

IX. But after all, if in any nation a great majority of the people, together with the supreme rulers, be of one religion or one sect, and several other sects of the same religion are dispersed throughout the land, I cannot see any hurt in it, as I said before, if the ruling powers generally choose and appoint persons of their own sect to be officers of the state; supposing still they do not exclude others by a law, and thereby lay a public reproach or odium upon those who have no way deserved it.

If there be a just and complete toleration of every such sect or religion, as doth not injure the public peace of the state, I do not see that the lesser sects have reason to complain, that they are not actually made rulers and officers of the state; provided always that there are no offices of burthen and expense imposed upon them, while they are not called into any offices of honour or profit.

And if there are persons of worth and value, very fit, in all respects, to sustain public offices, and yet are of a different religion, or different sect, from the chief rulers and the bulk of the people, I think it must be determined by the wisdom of the rulers to judge where the superior balance lies between the advantages arising from the good qualifications of the person, and the dangers which may arise from the difference of his religion; and accordingly they must determine whether it be fit to entrust him with any such public office or no, to which he has no claim by nature or by law.

Here an objection will arise from this concession, *viz.*

If the supreme rulers should judge, that the superior balance of wisdom lies in guarding against the danger of persons of a different religion constantly, why may not

this be expressed and confirmed by a law, which is but the constant and final determination of the supreme rulers? But I answer, as before,

Answer I. That, perhaps, it would not be just by a law to lay any mark of infamy, any public odium, or civil incapacity on persons, merely on account of their religion, where, in all other respects, they deserve well of the state. Besides,

Answer II. The present determination of any supreme ruler not to make such or such a man an officer or magistrate, because of the ruler's jealousy of his religion, reaches but to the present time and the present situation of affairs; and this will answer all the just and reasonable purposes of a supreme ruler: But to establish such a law, lays a long and constant odium, or public reproach, as well as incapacity, on that whole sect or party for time to come, when it may be the best interest of the state to have that very officer, or a magistrate of that religion, chosen or fixed in such a station. See Section IX. And,

Answer III. I inquire, whether, in many cases, this would not be found direct persecution for conscience: If ever so worthy a man be employed for several years in a heathen country, in an office of honour or profit, or both, and he be convinced and professes Christianity, would not such a law, which excludes Christians from all offices, turn him out of his place and livelihood, and perhaps leave him and his family to starve? The same case may happen, where any law is made to seclude any different sects of the same religion from all offices.

X. Yet, in order to secure the peace and welfare of the state, and the common good of mankind, which is the great end of government, I would here venture to inquire whether there are not two sorts of persons, who may be constantly and rightfully excluded even by a law, from any supreme or subordinate offices in the state, and that merely upon the account of their religion, or some wicked articles in it?

XI. *First*, When the religion which any person professes contains such pernicious articles in it, and especially if it has been frequently attended with such correspondent practices from time to time, as give abundant evidence and example that the principles of that religion encourage and authorize men to invade the peace of the state, the rights of the prince, and the civil or religious liberties, the property and the welfare of the people.

Thence I would take leave to inquire, whether or no the popish religion, by its persecuting and bloody principles, as well as by its subjection to a foreign potentate or prince, even the pope of Rome, who pretends to absolve men from the most solemn and sacred bonds; I say, whether this roman religion has not made it effectually appear, that neither princes nor people can be safe wheresoever the papists have power?* For I take all those principles of religion which allow the deposing of kings and the persecuting of people, merely on account of religion, to be unjust in themselves, and inconsistent with the welfare of any state; and, consequently, I query whether any wise

* Let it be observed here, that this scheme does not allow any prince or state to persecute the papists in the least degree on the account of their worshipping images, or making a piece of bread their God, and adoring it as the body of Jesus Christ; nor for any fooleries or idolatries in their religion, which do not injure the public welfare in things natural or civil. Not a farthing of their money, nor a hair of their head, should be taken away on this account. But if they will profess and maintain such opinions and principles about the powers of a priest or a pope to absolve them of their oaths, and to break all their bands of duty to the civil government, and to their fellow-subjects, I see not how they can claim any protection from the state, much less an admission into any post of trust or profit, as appears in the next paragraphs.

state should ever admit of such rulers or officers in any post whatsoever, of high or low degree, unless they can first clear themselves from these wicked principles? In the second place,

XII. *Secondly*, I inquire whether persons, whose religion will not permit them to give effectual security of their allegiance to their superiors in the government, or security to the people of their protection; I say, whether persons of such a religion as indulges men in the violation of all such bonds of security, can be safely admitted to be supreme or subordinate officers in any state? For such officers cannot faithfully stipulate or contract with their prince to serve him; nor can rulers or princes of such a religion stipulate with their people to be faithful in their office: Nor do I see any way how such a religion can effectually secure the distinct rights either of people or prince, unless this part of it be absolutely and effectually renounced.

XIII. And, indeed, as I have hinted before, such persons among the people who cannot engage by bonds laid upon conscience for their allegiance and faithfulness to any civil government, or who think their religion allows them to break those bonds for the sake of their religion, I do not see how they can claim common protection under any state or government whatsoever; and therefore I think, with more abundant evidence, they may be very rightfully excluded by a law from any office therein. And we may be well assured, that that religion can never be from God, which allows no secure stipulation between prince and people; that is, in short, which allows no mutual security in civil government, which, in general, is an ordinance of God for the good of mankind.

SECTION X.

OF THE POWER OF THE PRINCE IN EVERY WORSHIPPING ASSEMBLY.

I. Though the supreme power of any state has no right to impose the profession or practice of any one peculiar religion upon the people, yet since civil government is an ordinance of God, as the God of nature, for the welfare of mankind, the supreme power in any nation may possibly have a right to command several things to be done in every assembly that meets for divine worship: As,

II. 1. I think they may give it in charge to every religious society, as they are members of the state, that, sometimes at least, and upon proper occasions, they should preach up moral duties to men, as well as the duties of piety towards God; that they should teach men to be honest and faithful, to be kind and compassionate, to be sober and temperate, and to be dutiful to their civil governors in all those things which the civil powers have a right to demand; and that they should preach against personal and social vices, as slander, theft, adultery, drunkenness, quarrelling, murder, cruelty, cheating, faction, sedition, tumult, rebellion, and the raising animosities and disturbances in the state: Especially where the magistrates, as St. Paul expresses it, *are not a terror to good works but to the evil*, and are *the ministers of God for good.* This is the design of St. Paul's advice, Rom. xiii. 1—7, *Let every soul be subject to the higher powers.—Whosoever resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God:—For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil.—Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath*, that is, for fear of punishment, *but also for conscience-sake. For, for this cause pay you tribute also.* And he repeats such kind of advice to Titus the preacher,

Tit. iii. 1, 2, *Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work, to speak evil of no man, &c.*

All these things being necessary to preserve the civil government and the state in welfare and peace, as well as necessary and essential parts of all the religions that are good for any thing in the world, I think it may lie within the province of the supreme power to require that the people, in their religious assemblies, among other lessons, should be instructed in these matters at convenient seasons.

III. 2. I think the supreme power may require also that amongst the addresses or prayers for temporal blessings which are offered up to their God by any societies of men, there should be some petitions put up for the welfare of the government: Surely every man should pray for a spirit of wisdom and justice, and mercy, and the best of divine blessings, upon their rulers. This is the instruction of the apostle to all Christians, though it was supposed they lived then under heathen governments; 1 Tim. ii. 1, *I exhort therefore that first of all supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men; for kings, and for all that are in authority, that* under them *we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.*

IV. 3. If magistrates may require every religious assembly, meeting for instruction and prayer, to have lessons of moral duty and allegiance taught them, and to have prayers offered up for the governors in times of prosperity and peace, may they not also, when any calamity or danger attends the state or nation, by war, famine, pestilence, tumults, &c. I say, may they not at such seasons, appoint a certain day, or hours of the day, for worshipping assemblies, each to address their God in a way of prayer,* that these dangers may be prevented, or these calamities removed? Such a civil appointment does not so much as pretend to make the day sacred, and I think it cannot be reasonably scrupled by persons of any religion upon that account.

V. I have turned this question on all sides in my thoughts, and I cannot, at present, see any criminal imposition upon conscience in such demands of the government: For if the day which happens to be appointed by the magistrate for such a purpose, is held sacred by any religious party in the land, yet surely prayers for the welfare of the state and the nation can never be sinfully offered up upon such a sacred day; that is, it can be no profanation of the day to make such addresses to God. And, on the other hand, if the day be not held sacred, the hours appointed to this service are not to be supposed to ingross so much time as to hinder them from the businesses of the civil life, beyond what is required by the necessities of the state, or the obligation of the people to promote the public welfare.

VI. And if seasons of prayer may be commanded by the government in cases of public calamity or danger, we may by the same reason conclude also, that seasons of public thanksgiving may be appointed upon any national occasion of returning thanks for public health, peace, and plenty, or special deliverance from distress of danger: Always provided, that every religious assembly be permitted to worship their God in their own way and manner, on such appointed seasons; for those actions of

* Lest it should be objected here, that no magistrate may appoint idolaters on any day to worship idols or false gods, I would say, that the form of the proclamation, or public command, should only in general express the worship of God, which if any heathen subjects apply to false gods, the magistrate is not to blame, in my opinion.

thanksgiving seem to be a part of natural social religion, in which the welfare of the state is concerned.

Perhaps it will be objected here, that by this rule our King James the Second might appoint a day of prayer against King William, or the Prince of Orange, when he came really for the deliverance of the nation from tyranny; or he might appoint a thanksgiving for the birth of the spurious Prince of Wales, or the Pretender: For princes will make themselves judges whether occurrences are national dangers or benefits.

Answer. Where such things happen, every single person must be a judge of his own actions according to conscience, and must never trifle with God to obey the commands of a king; nor will the commands of a king lay any obligations on conscience in such cases where it is dubious on which side the true welfare of the nation stands. But in all cases where the danger or the benefit of a nation is most apparent and certain, and universally agreed, I think a prince may require the religious assistance of the people for the civil welfare.

VII. And perhaps it may not be unlawful, for the civil power to lay some small penalty upon those, who, without just excuse, wilfully and rebelliously oppose or renounce any such religious services for the state, that is, in cases of most apparent danger or blessing: And perhaps a heavier penalty may be appointed for such obstinate and stubborn spirits, as will boldly transact any thing in public, in such a way of sport or labour, &c. which will be a manifest and public hinderance to the sacred offices required by the magistrate, on the days appointed for public prayer or thankfulness.

We find the King of Nineveh, who was a heathen, was led by the light of nature to appoint, in a very strict manner, such a day of humiliation and prayer throughout the city, when they were in imminent danger of destruction under the threatenings of God, by the mouth of Jonah his prophet; *Jonah* iii. 5—10. And as the light of nature and reason seem to dictate it, so the success of it was agreeable to their desires, and the threatened desolation was prevented.

Whether the king had a right to command the ceremonies of sackcloth and ashes indeed may bear a dispute: But, so far as I can see, their "crying mightily unto their God," on some appointed day, might be a very lawful and proper command from their king, as a father and protector of the people, and I should think the people might be bound to obey it.

But still, as I said before, it must be in such cases only, where they are satisfied the true interest and welfare of the nation demands it. In dubious cases every man must have leave to judge for himself, and no man's conscience should be bound to pray for those things which he believes in his heart to be a public grievance or danger, or to pray against what he believes to be a public blessing, however the civil powers may enjoin or require it.

VIII. Here then, it will be said, if the magistrate may forbid any thing that gives public interruption to the solemnity of such national fasting or thanksgiving days by laws and penalties, in evident cases of national dangers or blessings; may he not by laws and penalties forbid also the common labours or sports of men on those days, which he himself believes sacred to God and religion?

This argument may be further enforced thus: In a christian country, where prince

and people are chiefly Christians, may not the prince forbid all his subjects, whether Christians or pagans, turks or Jews, to labour or sport publicly on the first day of the week, since it is manifest that the indulgence of such sports or labours on that day would be an offence and a snare to the Christians, a means of corrupting their children and families, &c. and hinder them in the learning or the celebration of the christian religion? To answer this question impartially:

IX. *Answer*, Let us turn the tables, and suppose the ruling powers, and the greatest part of the people to be mahometans; and then inquire, whether they may not command every person, of what religion soever, to abstain from all public sports and labours on a Friday, because it is manifest that the indulgence of them would be an offence to mahometans, and a means of hindering their children and families from the learning or celebration of some parts of the mahometan worship? If this be allowed, it is certain, whatsoever a mahometan prince has a right to do in his own country, a christian prince has a right to do the same in his.

But unless this prohibition of public sports and labours on any certain day, can be reasonably construed to the natural and civil welfare of the state or the people, it may be doubted whether any prince, either heathen, Christian, or mahometan, has a right to forbid any of his people to get their livelihood by public labour one day in a week, merely because it is accounted religious and sacred by him and the greatest part of his subjects. I say this may be doubted, and would bear a dispute; nor will I pretend to determine here absolutely on this argument.

X. Therefore I add further: God himself, when he was King of the Jews, or their civil ruler, appointed one day in seven, that is, Saturday or their Sabbath, as a proper season for the natural rest and repose of animals, both of man and beast, as well as for his own worship in public assemblies, and that under severe penalties; and "the stranger within the gates" was obliged to submit to it.

It is true, the great God well knew that one day in seven was the most proper and just proportion of time for the rest and repose of animal nature, and for the celebration of public religion: And therefore princes and states who know this, should appoint the same proportion. But since God, as the King of the Jews, appointed this seventh day, there seems to be some reason for us to say, that even princes who know not this divine appointment, may assume this authority to require their subjects to devote one day in seven, or ten, or twelve, to the rest and repose of nature; for the God of nature has informed us, by the fourth commandment, this is for the good of the people: And the prince may forbid, at least, all public labours on that day, and public diversions too, that all his subjects may have leisure, and may be encouraged to maintain and practise some religion, and to pay some public worship to their God without interruption or molestation. This seems also to be needful for the civil interest of the state or the whole people, as has been proved before.

But as this day was Saturday, when God was the King of the Jews, so in a mahometan country this day will be Friday; in a christian nation it will be Sunday; in heathen nations, perhaps, other days would be appointed; and it is impossible in this case to gratify every religious sect or party in a nation.

XI. Now if any weekly day whatsoever be devoted to natural rest, or to the worship of a god in a country, as it serves the natural or civil interest of mankind, surely that

very day seems most proper which the bulk of the people shall choose, and especially if both the rulers and the majority of the people agree in the same; even though the reason of their agreement is because they think it sacred to religion: Nor have the lesser sects or parties any reason to complain, that for the general good they are forbid public labours or sports, one day in a week. Upon this foot, I think the final prohibition of public sports, labour, or traffic, on Sundays, in a christian country, may be vindicated.

But if any particular sects think other days more sacred than those which are appointed by the government, they should never be constrained to work or labour on those days, except the necessity of the state require it, as I have before shewn.

XII. These are some of the powers, which I think a prince or a ruler may lay claim to, in every religious society. And perhaps there may be yet a further right that the supreme civil power may have in religious societies, *viz.* wheresoever there is any colour or ground for suspicion that the members of these societies are doing any thing to the detriment of the public peace, there the prince may require the presence of some civil officer to inspect and see that nothing be done contrary to the welfare of the state: Always requiring, at the same time, that this officer make no manner of disturbance in the religious practices of this society, where the offices of the civil government are not invaded, nor the public peace injured. If the prince has a right to do this in any other societies, where he has reason to suspect sedition, why may he not do it in religious societies also?

XIII. There are some other instances of power in things sacred, which princes have claimed; and even some of the best of our former writers, in speaking of these matters, have allowed more power to civil governors in such points, than either reason or Scripture will support. They have permitted princes to call and dismiss or conclude synods for settling religious controversies, to direct their meetings, and to preside over them: Some have authorised them to adjust what crimes shall be subjected to church-censures, and what not, as well as to execute those censures: They have given them power to determine circumstances in divine worship, and to regulate all things of outward mode, form, and ceremony, relating to order and decency, &c. But I can find no sufficient ground to justify these pretences either in reason or Scripture.*

XIV. I know it will be objected here, that those few rights and powers, which I have allowed to princes and states, do not arise to the notion of an established church: But in every nation there must be some establishment of religion, say they; there must be some national church, or settled worship appointed by the state, without which religion cannot subsist.

Answer. No particular religion or worship can be fully established by civil powers without some sort of penalties on those people, or officers, who comply not with it; and is it not this very doctrine of the necessity of an established religion, and an established

* That excellent writer, Baron Puffendorf, has fallen into these few mistakes, in that valuable little discourse of his concerning "The Relation between Church and State; or how far the Christian and Civil Life affect each other:" Which was translated, with an excellent Preface, written by Mr. Barbeyrac, and printed in English by John Watts, at the Rose, in St. Paul's Church-yard, 1719. These chief mistakes or faults may be found from the forty-fifth to the fiftieth section. I could not comply with these opinions, when I read it many years ago: Otherwise I think it is the best book that ever I met with on this subject; and the principles on which it is written, do not only give us a happy clue for the justest sentiments in this controversy, but even contradict and overturn those very mistakes of the author, which he hath slid into for want of care and attention in those sections which are most exceptionable.

church, which has fixed so many wicked and mischievous religions throughout the world, and which hath excluded the only true religion of Christ and the New Testament out of most of the nations of the earth, in former and later ages? And shall christian and protestant rulers think that thing so necessary in civil government, which is liable to such horrid consequences, and which they so much complain of in all other rulers, as being highly injurious to God and men, and to the religion of the blessed Jesus?

XV. And I cannot but remark here, that there are many persons highly zealous for an established religion, who are ever urging the pattern of the primitive churches, and especially that of the three first centuries, as the standard and rule to which our present Christianity should be reduced, in discipline and worship: They are ever informing us what a glorious thing the christian religion was in those days, how divinely the church flourished, and grew in piety and devotion, as well as in numbers, and in every spiritual grace and beauty.

We allow this account of the glory of those early churches, and the beauty of holiness, and the amazing success of the gospel which was found among them, though we cannot admit all their practices to be a perfect rule or standard of Christianity, which honour belongs only to the New Testament. But let those persons remember, that in those three first centuries there was no such thing as a church established by law; and then let all those glories be confessed to belong to the christian church, when it had no national establishment, no royal supports, no settled revenues, no civil power to aggrandize and to adorn it: And let it be remembered too, that when it became an established church, under the Emperor Constantine and his successors, its true glory and spiritual beauty and excellence by degrees faded away, and was almost lost by the visible powers, pomp, and honours, attending this very establishment.

The church of Christ, in the New Testament, is built on such a foundation, that it wants nothing of civil power to support it, besides the mere protection of the state, which every christian society may require and expect in common with every other society of men, who are good subjects, and pay all due allegiance to the state in which they dwell.

CONCLUSION.

I. Thus I have given a short account of my best sentiments, how far any sort of public assemblies for hearing lectures on divine, civil, or moral subjects, or the public preaching or celebration of peculiar religions, may be safely established by the state; how far some public worship may be required in general, and especially on particular occasions of the public interest of the state, and how far the people are required to pay their attendance. But I cannot find any sufficient power in the state or government to oblige the nation, or particular persons in it, under penalties to any form of worship. If I have in any thing exceeded the bounds of the just and reasonable rights of government, or too much limited the just and natural liberties or consciences of mankind, either princes or people, I shall be glad to be better informed in a spirit of meekness and charity, which generally attends the spirit of wisdom and truth.

II. The only maxim by which I have conducted my sentiments through all this scheme, is this: That the power of civil government reaches no further than the preservation of the natural and civil welfare, rights, and properties of mankind, with regard to this

world, and has nothing to do with religion further than this requires: But the special rights of conscience, and the things of religion, as they relate to another world, belong to God only. And the gospel of Christ does not pretend to erect a *kingdom of this world*, and therefore it alters nothing in the nature of civil government; but leaves *to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's;* Matt. xxii. 21.

III. There may be many things which a zealous christian ruler might think very proper to be done for the honour of his God and his Saviour, in the public world, and in the management of the state; and indeed he may do much for God in reforming a sinful land; yet in the peculiarities of Christianity, I find nothing that can be required or imposed by civil authority, without intrenching upon the rights or liberties of mankind: And I was not willing to indulge any thing to be imposed upon heathen subjects by christian governors, which may not also be counted reasonable and lawful for a heathen governor to impose upon Christians; because the religion of Christ makes no change in the nature of civil power.

IV. Nor do I know how to vindicate a christian state in propagating their own religion by any such methods of compulsion or penalty, which a heathen state might not also use for the support and encouragement of theirs: And therefore I cannot see it lawful for any civil power in christendom to suppress the publication of any new, strange, or foreign sects or parties in religion, where they promise and pay due allegiance to the rulers, support the government, maintain the public peace, and molest not the state: Nor do I see good reason to make any such laws, or execute any such punishments against the peaceable preachers of any sect or party, which we Christians should have thought unreasonable or unlawful for the civil powers of Athens to have made and executed against St. Paul, when, in the midst of a heathen nation, on Mars-hill, he preached Jesus and the resurrection; *Acts* xvii. 22. In all our reasonings and writings on this important subject, let us take heed to allow no such power or dominion to men, which would have excluded the best of religions, that is, the religion of Christ, out of the world.

V. I know it has been said, upon these occasions, that the christian magistrate has right to persecute or suppress the pagan religion, because it is false; whereas the pagan magistrate has no right to suppress Christianity, because it is true: And though these pretences to truth may be contended on both sides, yet since one may be proved to be true, and the other to be false, truth has always a right on its side which falsehood can never have. I answer,

Answer. Every one who sets up for a persecutor, will pretend he is orthodox, and has the right on his side; and there is no common supreme court of judicature that can decide this matter, till the Supreme Judge of all appears in the last great day: And therefore since the pretences on either side are not sufficient to determine the justice of the persecution, or suppression, of the other side, and since there is no common supreme court to which they can both appeal in this world, it follows evidently that each profession must allow liberty and toleration to the other, where the welfare of the state is secure, and brought into no danger by the practices of the inferior party. I might on this occasion recommend a book of Mr. Bayle's, intitled, *A Philosophical Commentary on Luke* xiv. 23, "*Compel them to come in,*" written in two volumes octavo, wherein, after he has gone through all the controversy about persecution, he adds a supplement to prove heretics have as much right to persecute the orthodox, as the orthodox have to persecute them.

THE APPENDIX,

WHEREIN

THE SAME SENTIMENTS OF JUST LIBERTY ARE CONFIRMED,

BY A VIEW OF

THE ORIGIN OF A CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

I. THE foregoing discourse was begun by tracing out the origin of civil government, and thence inferring the several rights and powers of it, and inquiring how far they would reach in any of the affairs of a religious society, and particularly of a christian church.

Let us now take a short survey of the origin of christian churches, and inquire whether the setting things in this view will afford any different lights or inferences concerning the power of civil magistrates in things sacred?

II. When the christian religion was first planted, almost all the states, kingdoms, and governments of this world were heathens: Even Palestine itself had heathen governors. The blessed apostles, travelling amongst the nations, and preaching the gospel wheresoever they could find opportunity, converted multitudes of single persons to the christian faith; these united themselves in little societies by agreement, to assemble together at certain seasons, and worship God, by the apostles' directions, through Jesus Christ.

III. In some of those same cities wherein Christianity was preached, there were, or might be, also several other societies of men under the same civil government, united together by peculiar agreements among themselves for different purposes, but all subject to the rulers of the state in matters of civil government.

Let us now suppose, for instance, in the city of Corinth there might be a "college of philosophers, a society of painters or antiquaries, a synagogue of Jews, an assembly of deists, and a church of Christians."

IV. Each of these being voluntary societies, they have complete liberty and power to choose their own presidents, teachers, and other officers, out of their own body, as they stood in need of them, in order to regulate the affairs of their society: And they themselves contrive and agree upon rules and laws for the government of their own society, *viz.* upon what terms persons shall be admitted as members, for what reasons they shall be suspended for a season, or cast out utterly; what times and places they shall meet in; what forms or ceremonies they shall use in any of their practices; what sum of money, or what utensils, or what goods, or support, or what proportion of these things, each member shall furnish or supply toward the general design of the society; and what shall be the business of every member.

These things, I say, must be agreed by the members of the society, but all in a constant consistence with the civil laws of the state, and the civil rights and liberties of every subject of it.

Note, Wheresoever their original founder hath left them certain rules and directions, it is supposed they all consent to submit to them.

V. Now to apply all this to Christianity. The chief and most important things in the christian society were appointed by Christ and his apostles, their first founders, as praying, preaching the gospel, singing, baptism, the Lord's-Supper, &c. Other circumstances, which were not appointed by the apostles, and which yet were necessary to be determined some one way, these were probably and naturally left to be determined by the common consent and agreement of the church, for their mutual conveniency and general edification; such as the hour of their worship, the place of their meeting, &c. As for other circumstances, which were not necessary to be determined one way, such as their common habits, their gestures, &c. these were generally left indifferent to every worshipper; always provided, they acted agreeably to the common light of nature and reason of things, becoming the sacred solemnity of worship, and in a consistence with the interest of the state.

I say, it seems most probable that the determination of these things was left to the public agreement of the people, or to their private liberty: But if any persons shall suppose, they were left to be determined by the rulers or officers of the church, I will not by any means debate that matter here: It is enough for my purpose if it be acknowledged, these things were left to be agreed upon or determined by the church itself, either the people, or their officers in that society, and not by their civil governors*.

VI. Yet still let it be remembered, that the power of the state, or the civil government, is supreme over all these societies and their officers, in all things which relate to the peace and welfare of the nation, or the city; and none of them have any right to make any laws, agree upon any rules, or do any thing contrary to the good of the city, or the civil government.

As for instance, if the college of philosophers profess and maintain the opinion of a public community of wives, or of exposing or murdering their children; if the synagogue of the Jews should refuse to give any pledges of their allegiance to heathen governors; if the Christians should pretend that civil dominion is founded in divine grace, or that the saints, that is, the Christians, should rise and take the city, or that no faith is to be kept with heretics; or if any of these societies should profess and maintain the right of persecuting or punishing any other society for their peculiar sentiments or practices, which affect not the state or the public good; they themselves may lawfully be sent out of the city, and be banished from the protection of the civil government, for these things are contrary to the public welfare.

Or if any of the members of any of these societies should be guilty of crimes that are inconsistent with the peace of mankind, or welfare of the state, *viz.* murder, drunkenness, stealing, cheating, slander, sedition, treason, &c. they may be punished by the state according to the laws of the land, without any consideration what other society they belong to, or any regard to it.

But I would proceed yet further here, and add, that if any of these societies should presume to punish any of their own members with the loss of life or limb, or seizing

* I have no concern here in that famous question, Whether a christian church must be governed by an episcopal person, or bishop, in the way of monarchy, or by a synod of presbyters in a way of aristocracy, or by the vote of the people in a way of democracy; but it is evident, that the civil powers, of what form soever they be, have no just right or authority to govern the church in things sacred.

their property, or in any manner which is inconsistent with the peace or welfare of the state, these members, so punished, or any others for them, may make complaint to the civil rulers, and these civil rulers have a right to restrain these particular societies from inflicting such punishments, and they have a right also to punish those that inflict them, according to the laws of the land; for it is their proper business to see that no member of the state be injured in life, liberty, or property.

Hence it follows, that these particular societies have no right nor power to punish those whom their own particular laws only may call criminal, except with such small fines, inconveniencies, or dishonours, as their offending members willingly submit to, or by sharp reproofs, or by suspending them for a season from their meetings, or casting them utterly out of their society: But they have no power nor right to call in the civil arm to punish them for such sort of faults. Indeed, if their crime be such as affects the common welfare of the state, or peace of mankind, they may not only be expelled out of that society in particular, by the members of it, for all such societies should suffer nothing among them contrary to the peace or welfare of the state; but they should also be cited before the civil magistrate, in order to be punished as the laws of the land direct.

And if I were to speak here peculiarly of the christian church, I would say, that it has no power to punish its own officers or members, according to Scripture, for any crime whatsoever, but one of these three ways, *viz.* by an admonition or reproof given publicly in the church, by suspension or exclusion from the office they bore therein, or from the communion of the church for a season, or by utter exclusion of them from the church, which is called excommunication: And the civil magistrate may punish the same persons, if their crimes affect the public welfare, with death or imprisonment, or any other civil penalty which the law of the land appoints.

VII. If nothing be found in any of these societies, or their members, contrary to the interests of the state or welfare of the people, then they may, by their professed allegiance to the state, claim protection of the state; the rulers of the state have no proper power nor authority to hinder them from meeting in their several societies, which were instituted for different purposes, but they are bound to defend them as good subjects. Nor have magistrates any power to determine the greater or the lesser offices, rules, actions, circumstances, or any affairs relating purely to these distinct societies: They have no power to appoint the painters, who shall be their president, or when they shall meet, or what sort of pencils, or what colours they shall use; nor have the rulers of the state any right to require the philosophers to change any of their opinions, or to read Plato, or Zeno, or Aristotle, or to alter the course of their lectures; nor can they impose rules on the assembly of deists, when to sit, or stand, or kneel; nor should they command the Jews when they shall wash themselves, or what flesh they shall eat; nor impose upon the Christians, who shall be their teachers, or what habits or garments they shall wear, or what gestures they shall use in their preaching or singing, or any other parts of their worship. In these things the state has no power to interpose, where the public welfare of the city, or nation, receives no danger or damage.

VIII. It is granted indeed, that if the necessity or welfare of any such city, or state, require that foreign silk shall not be worn, nor any foreign paper be used, in order to encourage a national manufacture, or that no person shall appear without a woollen

garment upon them, to promote the breeding of sheep, or that veal shall not be eaten, nor calves be slain, for a twelve-month, in order to maintain a breed of cattle after a great murrain, &c. all these societies ought to submit their particular rules and their personal liberty to these laws of the state, and to comply with them as the state enjoins. But where the affairs, exigencies, or benefits of the state do not require such commands or prohibitions, there these private societies and their actions are not to be modelled and determined by the mere humour, or caprice, or arbitrary will of a magistrate.

IX. Perhaps you will say, Are not civil magistrates to be obeyed *in omnibus licitis et honestis*, that is, "in all things that are lawful and honest?" And if magistrates require several of these particular actions, or circumstances of action, to be performed according to their will in these several societies, ought not the societies to obey them, provided there is nothing commanded but what is honest and lawful? To this I answer,

X. That I have read of an oath of obedience *in omnibus licitis et honestis*, "in all things lawful and honest," required and imposed by ecclesiastical superiors, whether justly or no, I say not; but I never knew that this was the just limitation of obedience due to civil powers: For since the authority of the civil power reaches only to the common welfare and safety of the state and people, the sworn obedience of subjects can be required only in things that relate to the welfare of the people and the state.

I never heard that those famous words *loyalty* and *allegiance*, which are so often used in our nation, signified any more than our obligation and our readiness to obey the supreme power in things of a civil nature, required by the laws of the land. Now the laws are all made, or are supposed to be made, for the good of the people and the safety of the state. *Note*, In this safety of the state is also included the honour due to the rulers, for if due honour be not paid to the ruling powers, it endangers the safety of the state.

XI. Let it be further considered also, that in the original compact between the government and the governed, the governed do not consent to part with any liberties of human nature, but only so far as is necessary for civil government and their common protection, security, and peace. They are bound therefore to obey, not *in omnibus licitis et honestis*, but *in omnibus quæ ad reipublicæ salutem*. Can we suppose that when the people swear allegiance to governors, they mean to give them power over all their private and domestic affairs and actions, or the circumstances of them, over their conduct in labour or study, in trade or recreations, and left themselves or their families no liberty of going out or in when they pleased, or wearing short coats or long, red or blue, of eating bread, or flesh, or herbs, as they thought proper, or dining or supping at a round table or a square one, upon a dish of turnips or a haunch of venison?

And if the people never gave up their liberties in these affairs to the rulers of the state, then the rulers never had a right to claim such obedience: And if they have no right to determine such sort of things, in natural and private life, in families, or in any voluntary societies, I know not what divine or human reason they can have to claim this right in religious societies, or in churches: Surely they can have no such pretence, except where the people or the laws have given them such a claim; and after all, whether such laws are good and just may deserve a debate.

XII. Let the christian church in Corinth therefore be esteemed but as one of the rest of these human voluntary societies, and it may subsist well enough in a heathen state, if the governors do but merely protect their faithful subjects, and do not stretch their authority into the affairs of religion, which is beyond its proper extent. Gallio, the deputy of Achaia, had some good notion of this matter in St. Paul's time, when he would take no cognizance *of words, and names, and questions* about the jewish religion, but only about matters of civil *wrong or wicked lewdness:* But he was much to blame, even according to his own principles, that he did not keep the public peace, and protect Sosthenes from the mob, "whether he were a Jew, or a heathen, or a Christian;" *Acts* xviii. 12—17. For this was the proper province of a magistrate, to interpose in matters of civil wrong or injury.

All that the christian church, or any other peaceable society, can claim from the state, is protection; and this protection is sufficient to guard them from all disturbance of their peace by men of violence, or harlequins and scaramouches, or any other intruder into their assemblies, chairs, or pulpits, besides those whom the society appoints: For if such complaints be made by the society to the magistrate, he has a right to restrain, by prison or proper penalties, such invaders of the public peace, as trespass upon the innocent employment, the ground, possessions, and properties of their neighbours; and he is bound to do it as a guardian of the public peace: Nor should any pretence of conscience screen the offender in such cases; nor can the magistrate fulfil his duty without securing an impartial liberty, safety, and protection to every loyal assembly, whether it be appointed for music or painting, philosophy or worship.

It should also be added here, that if any persons who are secluded or cast out from these societies, by the rules and vote of the society, will yet obstinately enter in upon their ground, and mix with them in their common acts of instruction, practice, worship, &c. so as to give society any disturbance; it is the business and duty of the civil magistrate, upon proper application made, to guard every innocent society of loyal subjects from such inroads, injuries, and disturbances; and that even in their festivals or recreations, as well as their solemnities or common employments.

Thus far shall suffice to shew the right of a christian church to be secured from injuries and impositions, in common with any other innocent and voluntary societies.

XIII. Now let it be supposed, that some of the civil governors of Corinth should join themselves to any of these societies, whether philosophers, antiquaries, painters, deists, or Christians; would there be any sufficient reason why they should be turned out of their posts in the government, because they are become Christians, or become antiquaries or philosophers, &c. supposing still that they fulfil the offices of their magistracy with honour?

And much less reason is there, why there should be a law made to seclude them from their civil offices, and lay a public brand or infamy upon them, because they join themselves to particular societies, which do not in the least interfere with civil government: Supposing always, that in these societies there is nothing dishonourable or scandalous, which would vilify and debase the dignity of a ruler, and evidently endanger the welfare of the state.

XIV. Yet no ruler in the corinthian state, who joins himself to any of these particular societies, has any authority or power to alter the special laws of that society,

or to prescribe new rules or practices to it: For he is taken into the society but as a single member, and has but his single vote, and consequently has no further right nor authority to introduce any one rule or mode, form or ceremony, into the college of philosophers, the society of painters, or the christian church. All the civil power which he carries with him, reaches no further than to see that nothing be done in any of these societies inconsistent with the good of the state.

XV. When a chief civil ruler becomes a member of any of these societies, he gains thereby an opportunity of knowing thoroughly all the affairs of the society, and of observing whether there can be any special benefit, damage, or danger to the state, arising from all the opinions and practices thereof. So far it may be beneficial to the state.

And it is certain, this civil ruler may be beneficial to the particular society of which he is a member, if he be rich or great, by procuring for them, or bestowing upon them halls for lectures, mansions for the professors, or chapels for their christian worship, schools for philosophical experiments, or painting, exercises, &c. and perhaps he may procure civil immunities and advantages for them, that is, such as add no tax, or burden, or inconvenience to the state: And he may favour the christian church or the jewish synagogue, if he pleases, so far as to appoint no civil or military duties at the same hours which would interfere with christian or jewish worship in the city of Corinth.

XVI. Thus there are some advantages which may accrue to the state, and some to the church, whereof the chief magistrates are members, and that without any such alliance between church and state, as some have supposed necessary for the security of both.

But if the advances in temporal things, which the church receives from the state, be not well guarded and limited, the church will grow more earthly, but the state will not grow more holy or heavenly: The church will be in danger of losing its humility, piety, and purity, and the state will run a great hazard of being made mere servants or slaves to the church. Frequent and long experience has taught the world this sad truth. Again,

XVII. Let us make a further supposition, that both the people and the rulers should be so much in love with the sentiments and practices of the philosophers, the antiquaries, the deists, or the Christians, as that the bulk of them should become members of their colleges, societies, or churches: Still the civil power would reach no further than the welfare of the state of Corinth. The churches, and other societies, must still determine for themselves the rules and circumstances of actions that relate to the design of their assembly, whether the rulers of the state vote for it or no; and every society may make such laws for itself and its own members, as it pleases, in things wherein the good or hurt of the state have no concern.

XVIII. Here I know it will be objected, that this is setting up "a dominion within a dominion," or *imperium in imperio*, which politicians have usually thought dangerous. But I think it may be sufficiently replied, in answer to this difficulty,

Reply. That if every such society keep itself within its own bounds, and meddle with nothing relating to the state; and if the civil magistrate has the supreme power and dominion even over all these societies, so far as to secure what relates to the civil welfare, the peace of mankind, and the safety of government, there can be no inconvenience nor danger in giving a full and complete toleration, protection, and liberty, to any such

societies. What detriment can any civil government be exposed to, by a master ruling his own family by his own private laws, or by a tutor or president of a college, who governs his own academy and students by appointed rules of his own; still supposing they meddle not with state-affairs, nor obstruct the public peace or government, but conform to the laws of the state?

XIX. And if the forms of government, in the city of Corinth, should change from aristocracy to monarchy or democracy, or if it mould itself into any other form, still these societies of Christians and philosophers, deists, antiquaries, or painters, might be safe in the enjoyment of their proper liberties, and the state suffer not the least inconvenience by them.

XX. Perhaps it will be inquired here, if the bulk of the people of a nation, together with their rulers, embrace the christian faith, may they not be esteemed as a christian state, and may not the whole nation be considered both as members of the civil state, and of the christian church, and be governed by christian rulers, as officers both of the church and state, and be ruled promiscuously by their laws and sanctions of rewards and penalties, both in things sacred and civil? And may it not be maintained as a mixed government or establishment of church and state, without any great distinction between them? I answer,

XXI. *Answer* I. First, when things of so very different a nature are mixed and blended together, it is most likely it will bring a medley of confusions into both: When we unite and mingle ideas so distinct as civil government and religion, as the laws and rights of God and of Cæsar, as persons and ordinances temporal and spiritual, as powers sacred and human, as the concerns of the soul and the body, as the things of this world and the things of the world to come, it will be exceeding hard to reason and judge aright concerning the conduct proper to both, or to either of them, and it will be almost impossible to determine and maintain their just limits and boundaries: It will introduce such a perplexity of things, as will scarce allow sufficient grounds to judge when, or how far, one incroaches on the other, and to correct any mistakes, irregularities, or unhappy consequences, which may be derived and grow from this unnatural mixture. In the second place, therefore,

XXII. *Answer* II. Since we cannot so well reason and determine upon things when in such a confusion, let us reflect what hath been the real effect where such sort of mixtures have been practised. Thus it has been of old, when roman emperors lent the bishops their secular power, and the bishops gave them a right to call synods, to preside in them, to determine affairs in the church.

Thus it has been done in many of the popish states and kingdoms, where bishops have been the chief rulers in the state: But if we inquire of our ancestors in this nation, when it was all subject to popery, or if we survey the popish nations of Europe, and observe their mixture of civil and sacred powers; what can we find derived from it, but frequent usurpation of civil power in things sacred, or of ecclesiastical power in things civil? And yet generally such a mutual agreement will be made between civil and ecclesiastical rulers, by some superiorities on one side or the other, as to keep the persons and consciences of the common people in deep bondage. This odd mixture has produced infinite confusion and mischief, both in church and state; it has brought in wars and slaughters, inquisitions and bloody persecutions, loss of all piety and goodness,

burning zeal, blindness, hypocrisy, and superstition, slavery of souls and bodies, and fraud and violence without end.

XXIII. Never did the all-wise God mingle sacred and civil power throughout any national government but that of the Jews, where he himself was both the political and ecclesiastical head, the God of the church, and the King of the state. Scarce are these mixtures safe in any other hand but his. When in later ages some of their high priests, the successors of the Maccabees, grew up to be kings, and God their supreme king withdrew from them his divine influences, and his kind superintendency, what terrible confusion, barbarity, and madness, were sometimes found among them?

XXIV. And I might add, that such dangerous mixtures as these, in every popish state or government, where there is no toleration nor liberty allowed to other Christians, who would maintain the purity of their religion; these, I say, are the very composition of the feet and toes of Nebuchadnezzar's great image in *Daniel*, chap. ii. which were made *part of potter's clay and part of iron:** These may try to mix, but they will not well cleave to one another. And if the dream of the assyrian king be divine, or the interpretation of the jewish prophet be true, these *toes* and these *feet*, wherein the *iron* is *mixed with miry clay*, wait only for the *stone cut out of the mountain without hands, to smite the huge image upon its feet and to break it to pieces.* Then the four vast monarchies of this world meet their last period, *and become like the chaff of a threshing-floor, and the wind carries them away:* Then shall that stone grow and fill *the whole earth*, and *the kingdoms of this world become the kingdom of the Lord and his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever;* Rev. xi. 15. Amen.

* Lowth, in his *Commentary on Daniel*, seems to approve entirely this exposition, for he gives no other sense of the words, *verse* 42. And if this were a proper place for explaining the prophecies of Daniel, or the visions of St. John, *chapters* xiii. and xvii. I think it might be made to appear, beyond all reasonable opposition, that the first head of the Roman empire was only civil, and strong as iron, like the legs of Nebuchadnezzar's image: The last was part civil and part ecclesiastical; such were the feet and ten toes of this image, or the popedom with its ten kingdoms, mingled of iron and clay, which await this final destruction.

THE

RUIN AND RECOVERY OF MANKIND;

OR,

AN ATTEMPT

TO VINDICATE THE SCRIPTURAL ACCOUNT

OF

THESE GREAT EVENTS,

UPON THE PLAIN PRINCIPLES OF REASON.

THE

PREFACE.

AMIDST the darkness of our degenerate state, God has been pleased to furnish us with two springs of light, to lead us into the knowledge of our own misery, and to direct us in the way to his favour and our happiness. These are well known by the names of *reason* and *revelation*, that is, the reason of man, and the revelation of God.

Right reason is ever uniform and consistent with itself, and is the same in all ages. It was given to man at first, to teach him all that we call natural religion; and even now, in its diminished glory, it gives sufficient evidence of our ruin, and assures us feelingly of our universal degeneracy, our lost innocence and peace: It affords us also many hints of the favourable condescensions of divine mercy, the necessity of our repentance of sin, and our trust in divine grace, in order to our recovery.

It is granted that the dictates of reason, amongst the various tribes and generations of fallen mankind, have been mingled with a thousand prejudices, weaknesses, and wanderings, with the mistakes of fancy, and the follies of superstition; and at best it has not been found of itself practically sufficient to instruct us in all things that relate to our salvation: Yet still, reason is a light given us by God himself, and it has very much to do in our direction toward our present duty and our final felicity.

But since our reason is so defective, both in its discovery of our ruin and our restoration, God has been pleased to teach in a more immediate manner by the light of revelation, and has given to mankind early discoveries of his mind and will before Scripture was written, and then by Moses and other holy writers, he has furnished them with knowledge of their original apostacy from God, their guilt and wretchedness; and he has been ever since leading them onwards by different steps or degrees towards the full discovery of his will and their salvation by Jesus Christ, the Mediator.

And since the revelations of God to men have been so very early and various, and have been delivered to us by different persons, and in different ages, there may be some difficulties arising from this variety: There may be some seeming inconsistencies between the several parts of it, and some supposed oppositions to the light of reason: Yet it is certain, that the two only lights which God has favoured us with, in order to learn his will and our duty, can never contradict themselves, nor each other. There is not any one part of divine revelation which is really inconsistent with reason, or with any other parts of revelation itself. There is certainly a glorious connection and divine harmony between them all, and all join together to make up one complete scheme, gradually advancing to perfection, and terminating and centering at last in our full recovery to the favour and image of God, by the promised Messiah or Saviour.

Now as the revelation of God in an illustrious manner supplies the deficiencies of our reason, and enlightens our natural darkness in the knowledge of divine things, so the exercise of our reasoning powers is very necessary to assist us, not only in the understanding of the several parts of revelation, but in reconciling them to each other, as well as to the dictates of right reason. It is our reason which shews us this blessed harmony.

If it should be found, that in my sentiments on this subject I have followed no human scheme, no established system, no hypothesis of any contending party, let it be known that my studies have been more engaged in meditation, than in reading controversies; reason and the Bible were the only springs whence I derived my sentiments, and the only tests by which I tried them, and not the authority of any great name, or any sect or party among men. Therefore if any reader is determined already to believe nothing but what is perfectly conformable to some favourite system, or the opinions of the party which he has chosen for his test of truth and error, I shall not court his favour, nor be greatly moved by his censure.

But if I have been so happy as to set these truths, which Scripture has revealed concerning our misery and divine mercy, in so favourable a light, as to make it evident to well-disposed impartial readers, how far they are supported by reason itself, and to discover and maintain this agreement between these two different manifestations of God to men, I have attained my end: If I have been enabled in any measure to render these sacred truths more intelligible and more credible to the sincere inquirers after truth, and to relieve the divine revelations of Scripture, against the cavils of an age which greatly pretends to reason, I shall account my labour well employed.

The deist will have no longer cause to triumph in the assurance of his attacks against Scripture, nor shall the Christian want matter for his satisfaction and joy, when he sees his divine religion vindicated by the powers of reason.

My chief design, and that which has regulated all my meditations and reasonings, is to establish and confirm what appears to me to be plain matter of fact, in the sinful and miserable circumstances of all the children of Adam by nature, and their hopes of recovery by divine grace, so far as either the light of nature or Scripture would assist me, and to vindicate the moral perfections of God, his holiness, justice, and goodness, in his works of providence and grace, or in his whole government of the world.

The ground-work of my scheme is laid in the original rectitude of man, and his early degeneracy into sin and misery; and I have drawn from the mere light of nature, sufficient proof and evidence of both these.

If what has been said in answer to the first question, does not sufficiently prove the doctrine of original sin, from the universal sinfulness and misery of mankind, I hope the first Essay in the Appendix will do it; the first part whereof represents that subject more largely, as it relates to the misery of man, and the latter end of it briefly enforces the argument from his universal sinfulness, both by reason and Scripture. The reader is desired to forgive the repetition of a few sentiments which are set in various lights, especially considering that this Essay was first designed only for a philosophical inquiry or amusement, and not to take its place in this book.

It would have been needless labour to enter into any examination of the learned Dr. Whitby's scheme, published in his writings, and to answer all his objections about original sin, imputed or inherent: For if the facts which I recite, concerning the sinful nature

and wretched circumstances of mankind, even from their infancy, are found by constant experience and observation to be true, then a great part of his scheme vanishes and dies as a matter of mere mistake in fact: And if my scheme, or hypothesis for the solution of the difficulties which attend this doctrine, is supported by reason and Scripture, then his objections against it must fall of course. No objection against a certain truth can ever be valid or strong, though at first view it may appear ever so plausible. And I thought this to be the plainest and shortest way of writing and reasoning, and not to embarrass my readers more than was necessary with the perplexities of controversial writings on so difficult a subject.*

Besides all this, I add, that though a considerable part of that writer's objections against original sin may lie heavy on some defenders of it, yet those difficulties are utterly precluded by the hypothesis which I have proposed in the last question.

What that very learned author has drawn out of the fathers with much labour and criticism, let it fall on either side of the controversy, will have but small force to move any man who considers these two things:

1. How little we can suppose to learn of the certain doctrines of Christ and his apostles, with any exactness and accuracy from the mere traditions of persons, who lived for the most part a hundred and fifty, two hundred, or three hundred years after them? For we have the original sacred writings as well as they; the rest is all but tradition and uncertainty.

2. When he considers that the early fathers, who wrote before these controversies arose and were debated in the church, represented their sentiments on these subjects in very loose and indeterminate language, as Dr. Whitby himself will easily allow; and they were indeed hardly consistent with themselves, or with one another, in this as well as in many other points of opinion or doctrine. This uncertainty of their sense is the spring of many debates between Dr. Whitby and Gerard Vossius.

I know some opinions will be found here, which are supposed to be borrowed from the common schemes of orthodox writers, but let them not be at once renounced with contempt and disdain,† by an age which is fond of novelty and reasoning. Perhaps there may be some reasonings here brought to support them, which have not been set in a clear and full light by former writers; and notwithstanding their old-fashioned appearances, these may be found to be divine truths.

If the reader shall meet with any new thoughts here, let not the book be at once rejected on that account: This preface entreats the author may be forgiven, who has entered into an untrodden path, sometimes not willingly, but he has been constrained to it, in order to solve such difficulties as we have never yet seen relieved to the general satisfaction of men, by all the usual and common tracks of argument. " Every scribe

* Yet I must confess, in the second edition of this book, I have found this intermixture of objections and answers more necessary than I imagined; and that merely to keep errors from triumph, and honest readers from mistake.

† It is too frequent a custom of many readers to applaud or censure a book very highly, according to the opinion it favours, not according to the reason or argument it produces. If the opinion be agreeable to the sentiments and language of any particular party, which the reader has chosen, the arguments, though ever so common or trifling, are pronounced strong and cogent. On the other hand, if the opinion happen to be near akin to those of a contrary sect, " then the arguments brought to support it are all trifling: The author is a heretic, and therefore his reasonings must needs be all weak and insufficient, if not dangerous and destructive." May divine providence deliver all that I write on deep and difficult subjects from the hand of such readers, till they have become more sincere and impartial in the search of truth!

who is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven, should bring forth out of his treasure things new and old;" *Matt.* xiii. 52.

If every person who is pleased to peruse these leaves, pays but the same high veneration to what Scripture has revealed, has the same just regards to the plain dictates of right reason, the same deep sense of the difficulties which attend these inquiries, and such a constant zeal to abolish the controversies of Christianity, and to reconcile contending Christians, as the writer desires to have; I persuade myself there will not be many rash and sudden or severe censures pronounced upon the arguments here used, though they may not happen to convince the reader: Nor will there be many angry adversaries, or many disdainful opposers of the reconciling sentiments of this book, whether they may carry in them the appearance of being old or new.

Neither novelty nor antiquity of opinion can make any certain pretences to truth, nor can they be esteemed just prejudices against it: As there are many divine truths which have been known and acknowledged from all antiquity, so I am persuaded there are some others which have never been seen in their full force and perspicuity since the days of our Saviour and the apostles: There are some sacred verities, which have had much darkness diffused around them by early corruptions of the faith, and by the controversies of succeeding ages; and these stand in need of some further light to dissipate that darkness, and restore them to their primitive perspicuity. Whether any of my attempts or labours here shall be successful for this end, must be entrusted with the judgment of the reader and the providence of God.

And now I have proposed these thoughts to the world, in hope to clear up some difficulties in our holy religion, and to shew how far our own reason may support what Scripture reveals; I leave all with the public, and shall not be solicitous to support all these sentiments, or to vindicate these proposals. If any person can derive any degree of light toward his satisfaction from these papers, I shall rejoice with him. Let every one choose what he likes, and neglect the rest. I will not persuade any man to be of my opinion till he sees reason for it; and whensoever I see reason, I shall change them myself. Our best concerted schemes have their imperfections, and therefore I dare not assume certainty in matters of doubtful disputation: Nor do I assert or affirm several things which I have here written; for I know myself a weak fallible creature, and it is no wonder if I should fall into mistakes.

I should be glad to see a safer and more consistent scheme on these subjects proposed to the world, which may rectify all the errors of this book with convincing evidence, and scatter our darknesses like a rising sun. To cavil at particular thoughts or phrases is much easier than to form a perfect hypothesis. But it is the prerogative of the great God only to pierce through all his own infinite schemes with an unerring eye, to surround them with an all-comprehensive view, to grasp them all in one single survey, and to spread a reconciling light over all their immense varieties. Man must yet grapple with difficulties in this dusky twilight: But God, in his time, will irradiate the earth more plentifully with his light and truth; then darkness and contentions shall fly away for ever. Hasten, O Lord, the happy day! *Amen.*

ADVERTISEMENT

CONCERNING THE SECOND EDITION.

IT is no little pains that I have taken to review this book since it was printed, as well as many years before: I have read also what has been published in opposition to it, and I would ever keep my mind in such a temper, as is ready to receive the truth from every quarter, and learn my mistakes in order to amend them.

But I am not yet convinced of any errors in the great doctrines here maintained; nor does my heart tell me, that my representation of the wretched state of mankind, in its present degenerate circumstances, exceeds the truth. It is by no means true, which some have imagined, that a retirement from the world, and dwelling much among my own solitary thoughts and old authors, have led me into these melancholy and dismal apprehensions of mankind: But it is my free and public converse with the world, in my earlier and more sprightly parts of life, has given me these just and distressful views of all the race of Adam. Daily observation in riper years continues to assure, that there is much more folly, sin, and misery, among men, than I have described: Hereby my proof and evidence of some original and criminal degeneracy of the creature grows brighter and stronger, since these mischiefs could not arise merely from the immediate hand of God, as a righteous and merciful Creator.

This scriptural doctrine of original sin has engaged my pen, because, in my opinion, it has a most extensive and powerful influence on several parts of practical godliness; I think a deep sense of it lays the best foundation for our submission to those blessed doctrines of grace, which make up so great a part of the gospel of Christ. It is this article which humbles and abases the pride of man, and brings him to disclaim all self-sufficiency, and to lie at the foot of God. It is this makes him poor in spirit, and renders him constantly a dependent and supplicant for divine grace. This leads him out of himself to Christ, for righteousness, wisdom, and strength, as well as excites him to a more fervent gratitude for every blessing of soul and body. It is this doctrine that powerfully forbids those vicious passions of self-admiration, and scorn of our neighbour, and as strongly inclines us to christian compassion. It softens our hearts to pity and relieve each other in the various distresses of flesh or spirit, since we are all by nature under the same condemnation and misery.

Whensoever I see this doctrine of original sin rejected and renounced, there is sufficient reason, from many observations, to expect the glories of the gospel will in the same

proportion be depreciated, neglected, and despised: If we are all born still in our original state of nature and innocency, the abounding grace and salvation of Christ Jesus does not seem so very necessary for us; if it was but a little bruise we suffered by the fall of Adam, a little grace may heal us. Nor shall I wonder to see any man, by degrees, run entirely into deism, who scornfully abandons this truth. I confess, I take this article to be of such eminent importance in our holy profession, as bespeaks our solicitous regards; though a late author, with whom I have now to do, calls it " one of the greatest absurdities in all the system of corrupt religion."

I have endeavoured, throughout this whole composure, to relieve and soften all the harsher, and more obnoxious parts of this doctrine of original sin, and several other articles of our religion dependent upon it; and this I did attempt here and there by some new sentiments, which I was sensible must run the risk of severe trial, and bear the test of ancient prejudice. But this freedom of thought seemed to be necessary where former solutions failed, as I said before.

I have also ventured to preclude, or to cut off some of the harder and more offensive consequences that have been often drawn or forced from these articles. It is evident that these points have been sometimes carried into extremes, and the explication of them has not always been well limited and guarded. To effect this work, and to secure due honour to the moral perfections of God, under all the sinful and wretched scenes of human life, was one great end of my writing: My intentions were perfectly pacific and not contentious, and it is with great reluctance I am drawn into any debate.

It was my design also to leave these, my sentiments, to the world, without any further vindication or defence; and yet I would not have it said, or thought, that I utterly disregard all opinions and arguments different from my own. I am therefore almost constrained, in this second edition, to make some remarks upon the only attempt to answer this treatise, which I have heard of, and that is the supplement to a book very unjustly called, *The Scripture Doctrine of Original Sin, proposed to Free and Candid Examination.*

It is acknowledged, that in this *Supplement* the same writer uses more candour and softer language, than he has done in the book itself, and deals, for the most part, in such a style as becomes a christian controversy: Yet I would humbly ask, whether he does not sometimes let a sharper arrow fly off? But this may be easily imputed to a sudden effort of warmer zeal against the doctrine which he utterly denies. I would ask also, whether he does not sometimes advance a mere popular objection, and pursue it in such an overbearing manner, as might intimidate common readers and affright them from these sacred truths, though they appear plain in several places of Scripture, and are supported by the daily observations of men, both heathens and Christians? I would ask yet again, whether he does not, now and then, indulge a bold and sublime expression to break out, which might be taken for a flourish of glory rising from a contempt of all that is or can be offered in defence of our doctrines? But the reader need not be afraid of such triumphant language, for I trust that whosoever will survey this whole debate without prejudice, will find that the author frequently triumphs without a victory, and though he has demolished many pages of mine in his own esteem, it is with mere shadows of argument.

It is true, indeed, that the bulk of mankind are often carried quite away into flattering errors by positive assertions and strong assurances; they dare not oppose a

writer who, with a sovereign scorn, defies all opposition, and despises every thing that can be proposed against his darling opinions. Upon this view of things, I have said within myself, "Surely I will begin to learn this manner of writing too, that I may gain more success for the great truths of the gospel in the minds of men." But, alas! I fear I am very much unqualified to aim at this talent: David might better wear Saul's armour than I could attempt this piece of heroism, or enter into this manner of dispute. Nor should I be perfectly satisfied with myself, to gain the assent of my readers, without more substantial and convincing evidence. The world indeed are ready to imagine, that where there is such confidence, and such triumph, there must be abundant proofs to support them; but they little consider how far this sonorous language will serve instead of reason and argument, and what numerous proselytes have been gained hereby to the several sects, parties, or professions, of human or divine science.

I must acknowledge, I once hoped that the very answers which I had given to various objections in the first edition of this Treatise, would have resolved most of the difficulties which have been since objected: But many of these answers have been utterly disregarded, and those very objections again repeated. Now, that such a solution of the difficulties may not be overlooked again, I have greatly enlarged the index, or table of contents, so that it reaches to almost every page, and points even an unwilling eye directly to those difficulties, and the solution of them.

Yet, to make the subject of this treatise still more plain and easy and defensible, I have in this edition here and there interspersed a few needful observations and remarks on this subject, either in the book itself, or in the margin; which I hope may be sufficient hints to solve any old or new objections, which are, or may be proposed, and to guard the reader more effectually from error and mistake in these important points.

It is true, I have mentioned no names, I have cited no pages, nor in all places have I used the very words of the objectors, because I would not turn this pacific treatise into a stage of controversy: Yet I hope I have given the full strength of the objection, as well as answered it with success. But the index is so large, and particular, as will sufficiently direct an inquirer to every objection and answer.

Upon a review, I have written much more than I designed, and am heartily sorry that I cannot so distinguish the additions made to this second edition, as to have printed them apart, for the service of those who are possessed of the first: But since they lie so much scattered through many pages, I humbly hope my friends will forgive this wrong, and permit a book, which hath been assaulted, to receive a few explications and defences for the satisfaction of the world, though they may not find their own particular interest consulted therein.

I do not pretend to have touched upon every opposition which is made, in this *Supplement*, against the doctrine which I have maintained, though I am not conscious that I have omitted any one difficulty or objection of weight and moment, which I have met with in that book, and which has not been answered before. All lesser matters I am content to leave to the unbiassed judgment of persons of common understanding and piety. Souls impressed with a due veneration for Scripture, and with a deep sense of their own sin and misery, guilt and weakness in the sight of God, will not easily be persuaded to twist and turn the expressions of the sacred writers from their most

obvious and natural sense; nor will they hearken readily to those errors, which are contrary to their just experience, as well as to the dictates of the word of God.

But if any thing further be required for the confirmation and defence of the truth, I heartily recommend my reader to a late excellent *Vindication of the Scripture Doctrine of Original Sin.* I confess, indeed, it hath received the show of a reply; but all the world sees how very few of the arguments there used, have been ever answered or regarded, so that most of them stand in their full force still: And I cheerfully leave this cause with that learned and ingenious friend of mine who wrote it.

I hope he will think it worth his while publicly to take further notice of this controversy: I am well assured he is able to support this doctrine with solid force of argument; and he can do it with candour too, where he is not irritated by "any unreasonable airs of infallibility and assurance, by sharp reproaches of sacred and important truth, and by feeble shadows and colours of argument, which have been often baffled and confounded." These are the things which, as he expressly informed me, gave him so just a resentment, and provoked his pen to some severities against the book which he opposed, and he professes also, this was done in imitation of the author of it. I wish with all my soul that no christian controversy might ever give occasion for such excuses on either side.

For my part, I pray for the blessing which this author supposes we have always enjoyed; I wish heartily that original sin may be demolished in us all, and have no more existence: But so long as this real and dreadful malady continues to rage through the world, and goes on to destroy mankind in multitudes, I hope in every age some wise and happy pens will arise to declare the painful truth, and convince the world of this article, which reason, Scripture, and universal experience join to support. If all sense of our native sin and wretchedness be banished from among men, the rising ages may be tempted to neglect the only sovereign remedy of the grace of Christ, the second Adam, upon a mistaken presumption, that our natures have received no infection from the first.

THE

RUIN AND RECOVERY OF MANKIND, &c.

INTRODUCTION.

GOD MADE MAN UPRIGHT.

MAN is a creature made up of two distinct ingredients, an animal body and a rational mind, so united as to act in a mutual correspondence according to certain laws and conditions appointed by his Creator. Now suppose the great and blessed God, who is perfect in wisdom and power, in justice and goodness, were to form such a new creature as man is, and any of us should sit down and consider, according to the best exercise of our reason, what qualifications would be due to this new-made creature, as proceeding from a Being of such wisdom, justice, and goodness, we should probably trace out these several particulars:

I. We reasonably suppose he must have a perfection of natural powers, both of body and spirit, considered as in a state of union, and suited to his present circumstances.

Not that we have any reason to suppose man should be made so perfect a being as God could make him; for the wisdom of God plainly designed to display its unbounded varieties of contrivance in different ranks and orders of his creation: And besides, we cannot reasonably imagine this creature, man, should be made with such sublime perfections at first, as he himself might afterwards arrive at by a wise improvement of his powers: For God would not preclude either the diligence or the pleasure of his intelligent creature, from advancing itself to superior excellencies. But still that creature, which was designed to bear his Maker's nearest likeness and authority in this lower world, must have powers perfectly sufficient for his present well being and acting in that station wherein God his Creator placed him.

It has been indeed the vain fancy of some writers, that the eye of man in his first creation was so acute and penetrating, that it could discover those distant stars and planets of heaven, or those minute atoms in the contexture of earthly bodies round about us, which are now only to be seen by the help of optic glasses: And they have been so weak as to imagine that his ear could take in the most distant and feeblest sounds, and was equal in its own original powers, to the advantages which we now receive from speaking and hearing trumpets: And that his feeling and his smelling had such proportionable superiorities in his state of innocence, beyond all that we now experience. But it has been sufficiently made evident, that animal powers exalted to this degree would have been a burden, and a perpetual inconvenience to us in the present state; they would

have been calamities instead of comforts, and, as an ingenious author says, a man endued with such exquisite senses would be

> ——— "so tremblingly alive all o'er,
> To smart and agonise at every pore;
> Or, quick effluvia darting through his brain,
> Die of a rose in aromatic pain.
> Nature would thunder in his opening ears,
> And stun him with the music of the spheres."
>
> POPE.

But all the senses of this creature, though not so exquisitely fine, yet they must be clear and strong, his limbs vigorous and active, his body healthy in all the inward and outward parts of it, and every natural power in its proper order.

Surely God would form such a creature in a state of perfect ease, without any original malady of nature to give him pain or sorrow. I cannot think there would be any natural tendency in his animal body to pains, diseases, or death, while he remained innocent and without sin or blame. And if there was any such thing as pain admitted into his first constitution, his pleasures must at least be equal to his pains, and his advantages also equal to his dangers: The very justice of God the Creator seems to require this.

I add further, that if we consider the goodness of God, surely we must say the pleasure of his innocent creature should be superior to a state of mere ease or balance to his pains, and his advantages should be superior to his dangers: Divine goodness seems to require this, as antecedent in nature to any state of trial.

And as the powers of his body must be perfect in these respects, so the faculties of his soul must have their perfection too.

His mind or understanding must have all that knowledge, both of God and creatures, which was needful for his happiness. Not that we suppose God should give his creature, man, when he first formed him, all manner of knowledge in arts and sciences, in philosophy and divinity; but he must know at his first creation, what was necessary for his present peace and welfare; his reason must be clear, and his judgment uncorrupted, his conscience upright and sensible, and his mind furnished with all necessary truths.

This leads me to speak also of his moral perfection. A rational creature, thus made, must be not only innocent as a tree or a brute is, but must be formed holy; that is, he must have a principle of holiness concreated with him: His will must have an inward bias and propensity to holiness and virtue; he must have an inward inclination to please and honour that God who made him, a supreme love to his Creator, and a zeal and desire to serve him, a holy fear of offending him, with a readiness to do all his will.

In short, either the new-created man loved God supremely, or not: If he did not, he was not innocent, since the law and light of nature requires such a supreme love to God. If he did love God supremely, then he stood disposed and ready for every act of adoration and obedience; and this is true holiness of heart. And, indeed, without this how could a God of holiness love the work of his own hands?

There must also in this creature be found a regular subjection of the inferior powers to the superior; sense and appetite and passion must be subject to reason, that is, the mind and conscience must have a power and readiness to govern these lower faculties,

and keep them in due obedience, that he might not offend against the law of his creation, and his will must be inclined to it.*

He must also have his heart inlaid with love and good-will to the creatures, and especially those of his own species, if he should be placed among them; and he must be endued with a principle of honesty and truth in dealing with them. And if many of these creatures were made at once, there should be no domineering pride, no malice, no envy, no falsehood, no brawls or contentions among them; but all harmony and love, each seeking the welfare and happiness of his fellow-creatures as well as his own.

This principle of universal righteousness and holiness, I take to be the noblest part of that *image of God*, that is, his moral image, in which Moses the jewish historian represents man to be at first created, and which I think was due to his nature from a God of equity and goodness. And the same writer assures us, when God surveyed all his works at the end of his creation he pronounced them all *very good*. And Solomon the wisest of men, in his book of *Ecclesiastes*, assures us, that *God made man upright;* Eccles. vii. 29.

It is granted that the natural image of God, in which man was created, consisted partly in his spiritual, intelligent, and immortal nature, and the various faculties thereof; and his political image, if I may so express it, consisted in his being made lord and governor over all the lower creation: But when we speak of this part of the divine image, which is moral, we are assured by Paul, that it was the rectitude of his nature, or his conformity to the will and law of God. Paul was once a jewish pharisee, and well understood the sense of Moses, and in his *Epistle to the Ephesians*, iv. 24, he says, that *the image of God*, into which man is to be *renewed*, and consequently in which he was first made, consists *in righteousness and true holiness*, as well as *in knowledge;* Col. iii. 10.†

II. From the justice and goodness of God, we may also reasonably infer, that though man might be made with a perfect freedom of will, and with a power to choose evil as well as good, that he might be put into a state of probation; yet it seems necessary that he should not only have a superior propensity to what was good wrought at first into his nature, but he must also have a full sufficiency of power to preserve himself in this state of obedience and love to his Creator, and to guard himself from every temptation and sin, if his faculties were rightly employed.

He must therefore have a sufficient knowledge of God and himself and his duty, so far as was necessary to practise it: He must have his Maker's law written in his heart, that is, he must have such light of reason and conscience, as, if carefully employed, would always lead him to judge aright concerning his duty; and he must have a ready and proximate ability to practise and fulfil it. Surely he must be furnished with powers

* Surely if the soul or will of this new-made creature had not a real propensity to love and obey *God*, who *is a spirit*, but was merely formed with a natural capacity or power to do so, in a state of indifference to good or evil; then his being put into such an union with flesh and blood among a thousand animal temptations, would have been an overbalance on the side of sensuality and vice: But our reason can never suppose that God the wise, just, and good, would have placed a new-made creature in such an original situation.

† Notwithstanding all the cavils which have been raised against these words, yet if these two texts are considered together, their most obvious meaning, and the plainest sense of them, abides still confirmed, and will strike an honest and unbiassed reader. *The new man*, or the principle of true religion in the heart, is created by God after his moral image, wherein he created man at first; that is, with a holy temper of mind, and disposition to the ready practice of all righteousness, as fast as occasions and opportunities arise.

of self-preservation in his state of innocency, and sufficient to guard him from offending his Creator, and losing his happiness. This the justice and the goodness of God seem to require. His natural powers in themselves must have a full sufficiency for his own security from sin, if he used those natural powers in the best manner he was capable of; otherwise he would be exposed to unavoidable sin and misery, and certainly fall into it, if he were not able to preserve his innocence and virtue: He would as it were be made for his Maker's anger, if he were not able to preserve himself in his love.

III. It is highly probable, from the goodness of God, that such a creature would be made immortal, that is, he would have had no principles of decay or death in him. It is true, the great God, considered merely as an absolute Lord and Sovereign of his creatures, might take away all that he had given him, at pleasure; but it is hardly to be supposed, that if his creature stood obedient to all his Maker's will, his wisdom and goodness would have destroyed an intelligent creature who had continued to serve and please him. Whatsoever had been done to his body, yet still we would suppose, God would not divest his soul of his natural immortality, but rather have advanced it to some better vehicle, or dwelling-place in some upper world.

It is likely also that God would have endowed his soul with powers to arrive at higher degrees of excellency and happiness, than those in which he was at first formed: And hereby there was great encouragement given both to his watchfulness against every danger of sinning against God, and hurting himself, as well as to his zeal and diligence both in improving his natural powers, and in performing eminent services for his Maker and conversewith him. This would be the way for him to improve in the likeness, and in the love of that almighty Being who made him, as well as more firmly to secure his own immortality and happiness.

IV. I think we may be able to add also, that the habitation, in which a God of infinite goodness would place such a holy and innocent creature, should be a very beautiful and magnificent building, furnished with all manner of necessaries and conveniencies of life, and prepared not only for his safety and support, but also for his delight. Our reason seems to say this: And Moses, writing concerning the first created pair of mankind, tells us, that when they were brought into this world they were placed in Eden, or a garden of pleasure, and had a right given them to all the excellent fruits and delights of such a garden, and were made lords of all the creatures round about them, both in the vegetative and animal world.

And as the dwelling of such an innocent and holy creature should be delightful and convenient, so neither should there be any thing noxious or destructive found in this habitation, but what this excellent creature, man, should have sufficient notice of, and should be endowed with sufficient power to oppose it, or to avoid it.

Or if we should suppose that this creature was placed in such a state of trial by his Maker, as that he should be capable of receiving some unavoidable injuries from any noxious thing that was near him, it seems reasonable that he should have a proximate and immediate ability, by the right use of his understanding and his will, and his other powers, to relieve himself, and to turn every such injury to his own superior advantage, and to balance every pain by equal or superior pleasure.

V. And if this creature had power to propagate its own kind, the child should be innocent and holy, and capable of maintaining its duty and happiness, as well as the parent.

Now if these are the qualifications with which such a new-made creature should be

endued, and these the circumstances in which our reason would judge, from the wisdom, justice, and goodness of God, that he ought to be situated; then by a careful survey of what mankind now is, and a comparison thereof with what reason would tell us he ought to be, we may be able to arrive at some determination, whether mankind is at present such a creature as the great and blessed God made him at first? Which is the subject of the ensuing inquiry.

QUESTION I.

IS MAN, IN HIS PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES, SUCH A CREATURE AS HE CAME OUT OF THE HANDS OF GOD, HIS CREATOR? OR, IS HE DEPRAVED AND RUINED BY SOME UNIVERSAL DEGENERACY OF HIS NATURE?

I HOPE we may derive some evident and complete answer to this inquiry, from the following considerations:

Consideration I. This earth, which was designed for the habitation of man, carries with it some evident tokens of ruin and desolation, and does not seem to be ordained, in its present form and circumstances, for the habitation of innocent beings; but is more apparently fitted for the dwelling-place of creatures who are degenerate and fallen from God.

It is granted, that the beauty and order of this lower world, even in its present constitution, and the wonderful texture, composition, and harmony of the several parts of it, both in air, earth, and sea, are most happily suited to the various purposes of that almighty Being who made it: They give a constant and illustrious display of the power, wisdom, and goodness of their Creator. Yet it must be confessed also, there are some glaring and uncontested proofs of the terrors of his justice, and the executions of his vengeance, both past and future.

Is not the form or shape of our earth, in the present divisions and boundaries of seas and shores, continents and islands, very rude and irregular, abrupt and horrid? Does it look like the regular and beautiful product of a God of wisdom and order? Survey a map of the world, and say, does the form of it strike our eyes with any natural beauty or harmony? Has it the appearance of a lovely and well-adjusted piece of workmanship? Or rather, does it not bear strongly on our sight the ideas of ruin and confusion? Travel over the countries of this globe, or visit some of the wilder parts of our own British Islands, and make just remarks on them all. What various appearances of a ruined world! What vast broken mountains hang frightfully over the heads of travellers! What stupendous cliffs and promontories rise high and hideous to behold! What dreadful precipices, which make our nature giddy to look down, and are ready to betray our feet into downfals and destructions! What immense extents of waste and barren ground in some countries! What hideous and unpassable deserts! What broad and faithless morasses, which are made at once both deaths and graves to travellers who venture upon them! What huge ruinous caverns of frightful aspect, deep and wide, big enough to bury whole cities!

Notwithstanding all these appearances of ruin and desolation on this earth, yet it is granted, that the great God may have made use of these ragged cliffs and promontories, these dismal caverns, deserts, and morasses, &c. to serve various purposes of his pro-

vidence for the good of mankind, while they dwell here, as well as sometimes for their punishment. His wisdom can bring good out of evil, and extract conveniencies and comforts out of the most hideous and desolate aspect of things. And thus his wisdom and goodness are glorified in the midst of these formidable scenes. And there remain still sufficient evidences of the perfections and glory of the Creator in this earth, notwithstanding the many appearances of judgment and ruin which are found here, as in *Rom.* i. 20.

But let us proceed into this melancholy spectacle. What resistless deluges of water, in a season of great rains, come rolling down the hills, bear down all things in their course, and threaten spacious desolation! What roaring and tremendous water-falls in some parts of the globe! What burning mountains, in whose caverns are lakes of glowing metal, or of liquid fire, ready to overflow and burst upon the lower lands; or their bowels are consumed within, and they are turned into a mere shell of earth, covering prodigious cavities of smoke, and furnaces of flame! And they seem to wait only for a divine command to break inward, and bury towns and provinces in fiery ruin.

What unknown and active treasures of air, or wind, are pent up in the bowels of the earth by the rarefactions produced from subterraneous ferments and fires, all prepared to break out into wide and suprising mischief! What huge torrents of water rush and roar through the hollows of the globe we tread! What dreadful sounds and threatening appearances from the region of meteors in the air! What clouds charged with flame and thunder, which are ready to burst on the earth, and discompose and terrify all nature for many miles round, and to make dreadful havoc of mankind!

When I seriously take a survey of some such scenes as these, I am very ready to say within myself, Surely this earth of ours, in these rude and broken appearances, this unsettled and dangerous state of it, was designed as a dwelling for some unhappy inhabitants, who did or would transgress the laws of their Maker, and deeply merit desolation from his hand, and he has here stored up his magazines of divine artillery and death against the day of punishment.

But to take one step further, how often have the terrible occurrences of nature in the air, earth, and sea, and the calamitous incidents in divine providence in several countries, how often have they given an actual confirmation to this sentiment! What sweeping and destructive storms have we and our fathers seen, by land and sea, even in this temperate island of Great Britain! What particular floods of water and violent explosions of fire do we read of in the histories of the world! What shocking convulsions of the globe, stretching far and wide under the affrighted nations for three or four thousand miles, and spreading terror through every heart! What sudden and huge diruptions of the caverns of the earth, with tremendous bellowings, which have filled its inhabitants with horror and astonishment, which have deformed its blooming surface, and have made wide devastations! What storms and thunders have spread abroad fatal mischiefs! Do not these seem to be evident tokens of the actual displeasure of a God against the inhabitants of this globe? Can we ever suppose that an infinitely good and gracious Being would have originally so formed and governed the inanimate parts of this lower world, as to produce such deadly concussions and such desolating appearances, if he had not designed it to be the habitation of such creatures, as he foresaw would become rebels against their Creator, and deserve these strokes of his indignation?

The remarks which the late ingenious Doctor Woodward has made in his *Essay toward a Natural History of the Earth*, may sufficiently convince any reasonable and attentive reader, that this globe of ours hath suffered such dreadful and desolating convulsions as we speak of, which must have been attended with horrible ruin, calamity, and destruction to the men who were then inhabitants of it. He hath found the several strata or layers of the upper crust of the earth, whether marl, marble, clay, chalk, or sand, &c. to have been broken to pieces and dissolved, in America as well as Europe, Asia, and Africa; and that huge trees and the bones of animals, together with infinite shells of sea-fishes and other productions of the sea, have been found enclosed in these strata, or beds of marl, clay, chalk, &c. and that at vast depths of earth, as well as at long distances from the sea: And whosoever shall peruse that author will see plainly, that the upper part of this globe has been ruined almost into a chaos, since it was made; and he imputes it with great reason and justice to the general destruction of the world, and the wicked race of men who peopled it, by that flood, of which Moses, the ancient jewish writer, gives us so particular an account. And what further dreadful convulsions of nature, and what unknown desolations shall break out hereafter, to punish or to destroy the inhabitants of this globe, lies beyond the reach of our reason to foretel.

Known unto God are all our hearts and our works, and all his own ways from the beginning, and those ways of his are managed and conducted towards us, as becomes a wise and righteous governor; sometimes for our trial and warning, and sometimes for our correction and punishment. Can we ever suppose that the blessed God, who loves all the innocent creatures that he has made, would place them in such a dangerous habitation, where many of them must necessarily be exposed to so many horrible accidents and mortal devastations, even while they continued in their own innocence and in his favour?

If we consult the writings of Moses, the jewish prophet, and Peter, the christian apostle, we shall find that they supposed the great Creator to have laid up stores and magazines of ruin and destruction within the bowels of this earth, which he foresaw would be inhabited by a criminal race of beings: And he fore-ordained to break open his dreadful treasures of flood and fire at proper seasons, to drown and to burn the world together with the inhabitants thereof. When *all flesh had corrupted its way before God*, as Moses speaks, he appointed to destroy man whom he had created: "He opened the *windows* or flood-gates *of heaven*, poured down rain incessantly upon the earth for *forty days and forty nights; and the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and all in whose nostrils was the breath of life upon the dry land died*, except eight persons; Gen. vii. 11—24. And the christian writer tells us, that *the world, which at that time was overflowed with water, perished; but that the heavens and the earth which are now, by the same* divine *word* and providence *are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.* Then *the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the heavens shall be dissolved with a great noise, and the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up;* 2 Pet. iii. 6, 7, 10.

Now the great God, who appointed such prodigious quantities both of water and fire to be reserved in the bowels of the earth, and among the clouds of heaven, for such a foreseen day of general destruction, when the sins of the inhabitants should come to their full measure, did also doubtless prepare his materials, and appoint the days when all the

lesser storms and hurricanes, earthquakes and floods, lightnings and thunders, and convulsions of nature, should break out and answer those particular seasons, when he intended to manifest his terrors to mankind, and to shew his wrath in their wretchedness and destruction: And he treasured up his magazines of wind, and flood, and fire, in the air and earth for these purposes. Is this a habitation which God has made for the residence of pure and holy beings? Is this such a peaceful place as a kind Creator would have formed and built for innocent creatures? Or does he manage these several scenes of our globe, as though those who dwell upon it maintained their primitive purity and his original favour? It is absurd to imagine such a conduct of a God so wise, so righteous, and so merciful.

Consideration II. Let us take a survey of the herbs and plants and trees, and all the vegetable beings which grow out of this earth, together with the brute animals which are found on the surface of it, and we shall find more reasons to conclude, that man, the chief inhabitant, is by no means such a creature, so innocent, and so much a favourite of heaven, as he must needs be when he came first out of his Maker's hand.

It must be granted here again, that the wisdom and goodness of the Creator have displayed themselves in a divine and astonishing manner in the animal and the vegetable world, beyond the utmost reach of our thoughts, or our praises: But still we may have leave to inquire, whether among the numerous herbs and flowers, which are fitted for the support and delight of man, there would have been any noxious plants or fruits of mortal and malignant juice, appointed to grow out of the earth, without some plain signal mark or caution set upon them, if man had continued in his innocent state? Can we suppose that amongst the roots, the herbs, and the trees, which are good for food, the great God would have suffered mischief, malady, and deadly poison to spring up here and there, without any sufficient distinction that man might know how to avoid them? This is the case in our present world; and disease, anguish, and death, have entered into the bowels and veins of multitudes, by an innocent and fatal mistake of these pernicious things for proper food.

It is granted indeed, that when Moses had dressed and furnished his garden in Paradise, with all manner of vegetable fruits and pleasures for the new and holy creature, man, he tells us of a tree in that garden which was called *the tree of knowledge*, and it was certain death to taste it; *Gen.* ii. 10, 16, 17. But then man had express warning given him to avoid the danger: Death was, as it were, inscribed upon that tree in plain characters, and it was wilful iniquity for him to make so dangerous an experiment. Nor would there have been any poisonous or hurtful plant suffered to grow upon this earth, if the inhabitants of it had continued in their primitive holiness, without some natural mark set upon it, or some divine caution to avoid it. God loves the pure and innocent works of his hands better than to expose them to such unavoidable perils, and miseries, and such mortal dangers and deaths, if they continue in their original innocence.

Again, let me inquire whether this earth, in almost every soil, would have produced such a quantity of briers, thorns, and thistles, and various weeds, which are so destructive to corn, the food of man, and create so much vexation to the painful tillers of the field, if man had been innocent, and the earth, his habitation, had never been accursed for any crime of the inhabitant? Moses, the famous jewish writer, mentions this very thing as a divine curse for the sin of man.

Let us arise to the animal or brutal world. There are many creatures, indeed, made for the service and pleasure of mankind, and they are easily governed, to answer his purposes in human life. But are there not many sorts of animals, also, that weak man can neither govern nor resist, and by which all his race are exposed to miserable wounds, and anguish, and death, whensoever they meet them?

Would there have been any such creatures in our world as bears and tigers, wolves and lions, animated with such fierceness and rage, and armed with such destructive and bloody teeth and talons, if man, the supreme creature in it, had not sinned and fallen out of his Maker's kindest care? Or would these murderous animals ever have been let into a paradise, made for the habitation of innocent beings; and that without power given to those innocents to govern and restrain them, or without sufficient art or speed to escape them? Would the children of men, innocent and holy, have ever been formed to be the living prey of these devourers? Were the life and limbs of such holy creatures made to become heaps of agonizing carnage? Or would their flesh and bones have been given up to be crushed and churned between the jaws of panthers and leopards, sharks and crocodiles, by land and sea? Are sensible, rational, and innocent beings, fit morsels for savages of the brutal kind, and were they first made for this purpose by a God of wisdom and goodness? Let brutes be contented to prey upon their fellow-brutes, but let man be their lord and ruler, and free from their assaults: And so he was, says the jewish lawgiver, in his first and innocent estate.

Give me leave to proceed in these inquiries. If man were not a fallen sinful creature, fit for punishment, would there have been so many tribes of the serpent and viper kind, armed with deadly venom to bite and kill man? Would such subtle and active mischiefs have been made and sent to dwell in a world which was all holy and happy? And would the race of all these murderous and destructive brutes, of every kind, have been propagated for six thousand years, in any province of God's dominion, unless he had foreseen at first, that his intellectual creatures there would have rebelled against him, and deserved to be given up to their power and rage?

What are the immense flights of locusts which darken the sky, and lay the fields desolate? What are the winged armies of hornets and muscatoes, that make a pleasant land almost intolerable by the incessant and restless attacks they make on mankind with their painful stings? If they are found in the scorching climates of Africa, and in the sultry parts of the East and West Indies, yet one would think such noisome and venomous flies should not swarm upon the hills of Russia, and infest the polar regions, if the Creator had not designed them for the vexation of the nations on all sides of the globe.

What are the innumerable hosts of caterpillars, which in a night or two turn a garden into a desert, but so many messengers of the anger of God, against a sinful race of beings that dwell upon this earth? And since we are neither able to resist nor subdue their power, nor avoid their plunder, we may certainly infer that we are not such favourites of heaven as God at first had made us, while we are exposed to the endless attacks, insults, and triumphs of such little despicable insects, and yet deadly and destructive enemies. The troublesome and pernicious tribes of animal nature, both of larger and lesser size, which are fellow-commoners with us upon this great globe, together with our impotence to prevent or escape their mischiefs, is a sufficient proof that we are

not sinless creatures, nor in the full favour and love of the God that made us, and that he has quartered his armies, his legions, among us, as princes do in a rebellious province.

Perhaps, it will be replied here, that these mischiefs of the animal and vegetable world, these poisonous plants and vipers, and savage beasts of prey, may be permitted to dwell in our earth, for the trial of its inhabitants in a state of probation, even though they were innocent; especially since it is certain, that their fatal effects do sometimes now fall upon good and pious men, during their situation here, which is a state of trial: But God can reward the sufferers in a future state, and thus absolve or vindicate his justice, wisdom, and goodness, in permitting them to be thus exposed in the present life. To this I answer two ways:

Answer I. There is a great difference to be made between innocent creatures in a state of probation, and sinful degenerate creatures in the same state. These mischievous and painful events, which now fall upon sinful mankind, would have been all righteous, whether they had been in a state of trial or no; but most of them plainly declare the punishing hand of God, as well as the probation of creatures, and therefore it supposes them not to be innocent. Whereas, if these plagues had abounded in a world of innocence, many of the wise and holy inhabitants, who had suffered these mischiefs, even if they were sent for their trial, would scarcely have found sufficient reason to rejoice in their situation, and to give thanks to their Maker, as every innocent being would surely have occasion and reason to do. Serpents and bears, stings and poisons, are terrible trials for pure innocents.

Answer II. The state of probation for innocent creatures would not have included death in it, a violent and bloody, or a lingering and painful death, such as flows from some of these plagues and mischiefs upon the earth. The destruction of our nature, our dying and returning to dust,is supposed, by the ancient hebrew historian, to be a curse of God, for the sin of man: And, when once life is forfeited among the whole race of mankind, and they are all subject and devoted to death, by some universal degeneracy, then a painful death may properly become a part of the further trial of such creatures who are to rise again: And any, who are pious sufferers among them, and who behave well in dying, may be rewarded by a happy resurrection. This may be appointed with much more propriety, than that a painful death should be made a part of the trial of innocent creatures, who had never forfeited life, nor were ever legally subjected to death. In the case of dying infants, this appears with greater evidence, as I shall shew afterward.

Upon the whole, therefore, such sort of noxious and destructive plants and animals, do not seem to be made for a world of innocent, sensible, and intellectual beings, to vex and disturb, to poison and destroy them.*

Objection. But did not God renew to Noah, the dominion over the brute creatures?

Answer. Not in such an ample manner as he first possessed it; but only the fear of man was to fall upon the brutes: Now this does not sufficiently preserve men from

* "As there happened an entire revolution in the complexion and qualities of the minds of the first pair of mankind, so to me, there appears to be evident indications of a designed change and alteration of the material world, and the nature of the animals and vegetables which subsist on this globe, from what they were when God pronounced every thing good that he had made." Doctor Cheyne, in his *Essay of Health and Long Life.*

their outrage and mischief; whereas, in the innocent state, no man would have been poisoned or torn by serpents or lions, as now. See Question VIII. Section 6.

Consideration III. The manner of the introduction of the race of man into life and being in this world, is another proof that we are not the innocent favourites of heaven. Can we ever imagine the great and good God would have appointed intellectual animals to be propagated in such a way, as should necessarily give such exquisite pain and anguish to the mothers who produce them, if we had been all accounted in his eyes a race of holy and sinless beings? And if the contagion or crime had not been universal, why should such acute pangs attend almost every female parent, in bringing their offspring into the light of life? Are not the multiplied sorrows, with which the daughters of Eve continually bring forth their young, a pretty evident token that they are not in their original state of favour with that God who created them, and pronounced a blessing upon them in their propagation?*

The jewish lawgiver, in the beginning of his history, tells us, that God blessed the first man and woman that he made, and bid them *be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it;* Gen. i. 28; and the same ancient writer, within a page or two, tells us, that these "multiplied sorrows" in the bearing and birth of children, are pronounced as a curse from an offended God; *chapter* iii. 16. Surely the curse is not as old as the blessing: But sin and sorrow came in together, and spread a wide curse over the birth of man, which before stood only under a divine benediction: Nor is the blessing on human propagation quite taken away, though pains of child-bearing are added to it. Daily observation and experience prove that the blessing of propagation, repeated to Noah, *Gen.* ix. 6, did not take away that curse. See Question VIII. at the end.

Consideration IV. Let us consider, in the next place, how the generality of mankind are preserved in life. Some few there are, indeed, whom divine providence has raised to riches and plenty, and their food is daily provided for them without care or toil; but the millions of human creatures, in all the nations of the earth, are forced to support a wretched life by hard labour of the body, and intense and grievous fatigue of their joints and limbs, and all their natural powers. What dreadful risks, both of life and limbs, do multitudes run through, in order to purchase their own necessary food, and to support their young helpless families at home? What waste of the hours of sweet repose at midnight, as well as long, and slavish, and painful toils of the day, do multitudes sustain, in order to procure daily nourishment? It is by the sweat of their brows they obtain their bread; it is by a continual exhausting their vital spirits, that many of them are forced to relieve their own hunger, and to keep off death, as well as to feed their young offspring, that otherwise would be born merely to perish.

If we survey the lower tribes of mankind, even in Great Britain, in a land of freedom and plenty, a climate temperate and fruitful, a country which abounds with corn and fruits, and is stored with beasts, and fowl, and fish, in rich variety for food, what a hard shift do ten thousand families make, to keep out famine, and support life! Their whole time is devoured with the labours of the flesh, and their souls ever

* The author has been censured here for not dropping a tear over the fair sex under their sorrows and acute pains: But he imagines he has been dropping tears in every page, and that over every part of mankind, and on them in particular, in several paragraphs of this Book.

beset, and almost eaten up with gnawing cares and anxieties, to answer this important question, *What shall I eat, and what shall I drink*, even in the poorest and the coarsest manner! But if we send our thoughts to the sultry regions of Africa, or the frost and snows of Norway, to the rocks and deserts of Lapland and northern Tartary, what a hideous and frightful thing is human life in those climates! How is the rational nature of man almost lost between their slavery, their brutality, and their incessant toils and hardships! They are treated like brutes by their lords, and they live like dogs and asses among labours and wants, hunger and weariness, blows and burthens without end. Did God appoint this for innocents?

Perhaps, you will say, there is a pleasure in eating and drinking, which answers to the pain of procuring our food: But, alas! can this short pleasure of a few minutes, in trolling a few morsels down our throats, or washing the gullet with plenty of liquids, be supposed to give a full recompence for the incessant labours of life? Does it bear any proportion to the length of toil, pain, and hazard, and the tiresome fatigues of our spirits and our limbs, wherewith the provisions of life are procured? Moses acquaints us, indeed, that man, even in his innocent and blessed state, was placed in a noble and lovely garden, and was appointed to *dress it:* This was no curse, but a wise appointment of the God of nature by intermingled labour and exercise to preserve our health and vigour. But when the same writer comes to introduce the toil and fatigues we are forced to sustain, in order to secure us from starving, when he speaks of "eating our bread in the sweat of our brows," *Gen.* iii. 17—19, he acknowledges this to be another of the curses of God for the sin of man, and it is scattered all round the globe.*

Consideration V. Consider the character, temper, and quality of mankind in general, even the multitudes and millions of mankind in all nations, with regard to religion and virtue, and then it will be hard to persuade ourselves that these are creatures, who enjoy the favour of their Maker, as his children, or bear the image of their common Father in knowledge and goodness, as his original and native offspring ought to do.

I grant there are, here and there, some few persons, who are restored to some degrees of conformity to him that made them; they are become his children by repentance, and return to God by a divine change passed upon their natures, and they enjoy a share of his special love: But the bulk of the world are of another stamp and character, and

* It is strange that any man should say, in this sentence of God, *Gen.* iii. 15—19, "No curse is pronounced upon either Adam's body, soul, or posterity; that the sorrow of child-bearing is not inflicted as a curse; that the labours of life were encreased, but not as a curse; and that this death was not a curse," &c. I would fain ask, What is a curse, if some natural evil pronounced and executed upon a person, or thing, be not so; especially when it is pronounced upon the account of sin, and comes from God himself, as supreme governor and judge? And even the curse on the ground falls properly on the man who tills it.

It is granted, that all these may be sanctified by the covenant of grace to good people, and turned to their advantage. The wisdom of God can turn curses into blessings; *Gen.* l. 20. *Deut.* xxiii. 5. Yet the original pronunciation and infliction of these evils was designed as a curse, or punishment for sin, as it is written, Gal. iii. 10, *Cursed is every one who continueth not in all things, &c.* And I think it will appear evidently to every one who with common sense and without prejudice reads the history of the fall of man in *Gen.* iii. 16—19. And that death was designed as a curse on man for sin, is evident; for Christ suffered this curse for us; *Gal.* iii. 13.

It is granted also, that God might in Noah's time take off, perhaps, some part of the curse from the ground, *Gen.* v. 29, and bless it with greater fruitfulness; he might renew his blessing on propagation, *Gen.* ix. 1, and many other blessings may be added: But still the curses of hard toil and sweating, of painful child-bearing, and of death, may be, and are actually continued through all generations, though some blessings may be mingled with them: And this is sufficient to answer all these objections. See more, Question VIII. at the end.

sufficiently shew there is some sinful and fatal contagion spread through the inhabitants of this province of God's dominion. John the apostle, in one of his letters, tells us, that there are few who are *born of God*, as new creatures, but *the whole world lies in wickedness*, 1 John v. 19.

Would the blessed God make a world of intelligent creatures so ignorant and thoughtless of himself, and so insolent and rebellious against him, as man now is? Can we think of that gross and stupid ignorance of the true God which reigns through vast tracts of land in Asia, Africa, and America, and the thick darkness, as well as toil and slavery, which buries all the heathen countries, and reduces them yet further almost to brutes and savages; can we think of the abominable idolatries, the lewd and the cruel rites of worship, which have been spread through some whole nations; the impious, the wicked, and ridiculous superstitions which are practised among the greatest part of the world, and yet believe the blessed God would put such wretched and polluted workmanship out of pure hands?

Can we survey the bold and desperate impiety and profaneness, the swearing and cursing, and wild blasphemy that is practised and pronounced daily and nightly, among vast multitudes in those countries which know and profess the true God; can we behold that almost universal neglect of God, his fear, and his worship, and of the obedience due to him, which is found even among those inhabitants of this our world, who say they believe in God, and yet imagine that those wretches love their Maker, that they wear his image, and are conformable to his will, as his original creature must and ought to be?

Nor are mankind only negligent of their duty to God, but they seem to have abandoned their duties to their fellow-creatures also. Can we think of the perpetual practices of fraud and villany in the commerce of mankind, the innumerable instances of oppression and cruelty, which run through the world; the pride and humour of the great, the wrath and ambition of most princes, their wild and mad extravagancies of crime and folly, as well as their boundless insolence and tyranny over their subjects, and the endless iniquities and mischiefs that arise from envy, malice, and revenge, practised among lower people; and yet suppose that man was ever made with these vices in him, and these disorders around him, by that wisdom and goodness that created him? If we take a survey of the impure scenes of lust and intemperance and drunken madness which defy the day-light, and pollute the darkness; if we think of the monstrous barbarities that are continually committed by men in the christian inquisitions of Spain, Portugal, and Italy, and among all the brutal and wicked tribes of heathenism, the African savages, and the American cannibals, who kill and roast their fellow-creatures, and eat up men as they eat bread; can we still imagine that mankind is a race of beings, who abide in their own native and original state, such as they came from the hands of their Maker?

Shall it be said, in opposition to this view of things, that it is not the greatest part of mankind that are so shamefully ignorant, and so abominably vile? I answer,

Answer. That in matters of religion the greatest part of the world are gross idolaters; they adore the souls of the dead for gods, or they worship the sun and moon, or beasts, birds, images, names, fabled gods, stocks, and stones, or any thing but the true God: They neither know their Maker, nor love, nor worship him. There are many whole nations that practise abominable vices by general custom and consent, by the approba-

tion of their wise men, and by long tradition, if not by the authority of their laws. This has been abundantly demonstrated by learned writers of the present age, both from the modern travels of the inquisitive, and from ancient histories, when they would shew in what need mankind stood of a divine revelation.

In matters of morality, though the bulk of mankind are not guilty of the very vilest crimes with regard to their fellow-creatures, yet if we consider the numerous corrupt inclinations and sinful passions that sway all the world, the lesser vices and irregularities that work and run through the hearts and lives even of the best and most civilised parts of the universe; if we observe the strange blindness of the understandings of men in divine things, the unfaithfulness of conscience, the unwillingness to know any mortifying and self-denying truths and duties, the general prevalence of appetite and sinful desires over the powers and the rules of reason, and that not only among the unthinking multitude, but even where reason is consulted and makes its feeble remonstrances; if we consider the universal disorder among the faculties of mankind, and the violation of that harmony and order wherein consist innocence, virtue, and peace; if we add to all this heap of confusion, their general thoughtlessness and disregard of God, and their gross defects in benevolence to their neighbours; it will appear plain enough, that there is not one upon earth that is truly righteous and without sin; and it is more abundantly evident, that mankind are far from a state of innocence and perfect virtue: They are fallen from God, and have lost that likeness to their Maker, and that love of him, and those principles of universal virtue, which doubtless were implanted in them by so wise, so righteous, so kind, and benevolent a Creator.

That far the greatest number of men are evil, or greatly criminal, was a known sentiment of the ancients. The wiser and more considerate heathens saw and bewailed it, though they knew not how to account for it. οἱ πλειονες κακοι, "*most men are wicked,*" was the sentence of a Greek philosopher, and the common opinion of the most intelligent observers of mankind. The poets were generally loose enough themselves, but they were wise enough to observe the universal wickedness of mankind, and agree entirely in this obvious and general truth. Virgil tells us, that few are virtuous enough to escape the punishments of the other world: He brings in a ghost telling his son,

Pauci læta arva tenemus.

And in this life the character of human nature among the poets is this:

"Nitimur in vetitum semper, cupimusque negata."
Gens humana ruit per vetitum nefas,
Audax omnia perpeti.

HOR.

And that vice is early and universal, he says,

Nam vitiis nemo sine nascitur.

And when this author speaks of young men in general, he gives them this character:

Cereus in vitium flecti, monitoribus asper.

Seneca says just the same:

Pejora juvenes facilè præcepta audiunt.

And Juvenal abounds in this account of human nature:

Rari quippe boni: Numero vix sunt totidem quot
Thebarum portæ, vel divitis ostia Nili.
Quæ tam festa dies ut cesset prodere furem?

———Ad mores natura recurrit
Damnatos, fixa et mutari nescia.———
Quisnam hominum est quem tu contentum videris uno
Flagitio? ——— Dociles imitandis
Turpibus et pravis omnes sumus.

JUV.

They own, indeed, there was once a golden age, or a state of innocence at first. Their reason told them, that the great God must and did make man upright and good; but they imagined that mankind did degenerate by degrees in successive ages, and at last grew universally wicked. This is asserted not only by satirical writers, but by those of a gentler disposition and a softer pen. Ovid and Manilius were no satirists, yet they speak the very same language:

Protinus erupit venæ pejoris in ævum
Omne nefas: Fugere pudor, verumque fidesque.
In quorum subiere locum fraudesque dolique
Insidiæque, et vis, et amor sceleratus habendi:
Victa jacet pietas, terras Astræa reliquit.

OVID.

Perquè tot ætates hominum, tot tempora et annos,
Tot bella, et varios etiam sub pace labores,
Cum fortuna fidem que ærat, vix invenit usquam.
At quanta est scelerum moles per sæcula cuncta?
In populo scelus est: Et abundant cuncta furore,
Et fas atque nefas mistum, legesque per ipsas
Sævit nequities.

MANIL.

The sense of all which is thus represented in English:

"There are very few who die that go to heaven, or a state of happiness. We are always desiring and pursuing forbidden things. Mankind is bold to rush into forbidden wickedness; nor is any man born without vices: Young men most readily hearken to evil counsels; they are soft as wax to be moulded into vice, but rough and rugged to their best monitors. Good men are very few, scarce as many as the gates of the city Thebes, or the mouths of the Nile. What day is there that does not shew us some new malefactors? Nature recurs to its own wicked manners, is fixed in it, and knows not how to change. How few persons will you find contented with one sort of wickedness! We are all very forward to learn and imitate whatever is base or wicked. After the golden age, and some few following seasons, all manner of iniquity broke out: Modesty, truth, and faithfulness, are quite fled away, in whose place came deceit, mischief, violence, and wicked covetousness. Piety lay subdued, and justice left the earth. And through so

many ages of men, so many murderous wars, and labours, and toils, in time of peace, there is scarce such a thing as honesty to be found; but through all ages there is an abundant load of crimes. Wickedness runs through the people: Madness rages, fills, and overwhelms all things. Right and wrong all are mingled, and iniquity reigns even through the very laws of men."

This was the common complaint of the most observing heathens in their age, as it is ours in the present day.

Consideration VI. Not only those who are grown up to mature age, but even mankind in its younger years, before it is capable of proper moral actions, discovers the principles of iniquity and the seeds of sin. What young ferments of spite and envy, what native wrath and rage sometimes are found in the little hearts of infants, and sufficiently discovered by their little hands, and their eyes, and their wrathful countenances, even before they have learned to speak, or to know good and evil! What additional crimes of lying and deceit, what obstinacy and perverseness proceed to blemish their younger years!*

How little knowledge or thought of God, their Creator and Governor, is found among children, even when they begin to distinguish between good and evil, right and wrong! What an utter disregard of him that made them, and of the duties they owe to him! How hard is it to teach them to know their Maker, and to obey him! And no wonder it it so in children, since men and women are just the same.

Yet, farther, how little prevailing sense or practice of what is morally right and good is seen among them, when they begin to act agreeably to their own childish and youthful age! How contrary is their conduct to the laws of reason, which are the laws of their Maker! How do the evil passions of nature, and irregular appetites, and vices of the will, prevail in them, and over them betimes! Even from their first capacity of acting as moral creatures in the world; how are they led away to practise falsehood and injury to their play-fellows, and that sometimes with insolence, cruelty, and revenge! How often are they engaged in bold instances of disobedience to parents or teachers, and in acts of shameful intemperance! They do evil with greediness, both to themselves and to their fellow-creatures: Nor do I think there is one youth in the world who has not, on particular occasions, manifested some early inclinations to one vice or another. Would this have been the case, if mankind had been just such creatures as they came from their Maker's hand?

* Here our discourse is at once confronted by bringing in the words of our Saviour, Matt. xviii. 3, *Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.* Little children, say they, are here made the patterns of humility, meekness, and innocence; and in several other places of Scripture, a state of childhood is represented as innocent, meek, and humble; and therefore they have no such native vices. I answer this objection by granting,

Answer. That children appear to be of a much meeker and milder temper than grown persons, because they have much fewer temptations to vices of various kinds than grown persons meet with: Their inward vices are seldom awakened and provoked so much as they are in advancing years.

Let it be further observed, that this humility of children, which is recommended in this text, is their freedom from that ambition which possessed the disciples, when they sought *who should be greatest in the kingdom of heaven.*

I grant also, that young children in general are really meek and innocent, in comparison with persons grown up, who have increased in pride and malice; and this is enough for such representations in Scripture.

But after all, I ask, are not these sad descriptions which I have given of the vicious tempers of many children, just and true? Does not daily observation discover them? And if so, whence does this evil temper arise, which at any time discovers itself in any of these little creatures? What is the root that brings forth such early bitter fruit? I say, whence can it proceed, or what is it, but some innate evil disposition that they bring into the world with them? This will appear more evidently in the following pages, wherein other pretended causes are excluded and refuted.

Nor can these vicious propensities be imputed to any ill influences of custom, or education, or example; for many of these things appear in children before they can take any notice of any such examples set before them, or are capable of such imitation. And it might be added, that even in the best of families, where good examples stand round them, where children from their youngest years are instructed in their duty, and encouraged and excited to practise virtue and religion, and persuaded to it by all the motives of authority and love, and led by many examples as well as by precepts, yet their hearts naturally run astray from God. The greatest part of them in their childhood visibly follow the corrupt influences of sense, appetite, and passion, and in very early years they manifest the inward evil principles of pride, obstinacy, and disobedience: And multitudes, even in such families, grow up to practise many vices, and to publish the iniquity and shame of their nature, in opposition to all the influences of instruction and advice, example and authority. And if all children were utterly untaught and unrestrained, even in the years of childhood, these iniquities would break out and discover themselves with much more evidence and shame: This appears in particular families, even in such countries and such towns which are civilized by learning and politeness. There are a thousand instances wherein this is evident in fact; that where the education of children is neglected, the whole generation becomes vicious: So among the heathens, there are whole nations wicked, perhaps without an exception.

Consideration VII. To give yet a fuller confirmation of this truth, that mankind have a sinful and corrupt nature in them, let it be observed, that where persons have not only been educated from their youngest years in all the practices of piety, virtue, and goodness, as far as parents could influence them, but where young persons themselves have taken something of a religious turn betimes, and have sought after true wisdom and piety, what wretched and perpetual hindrances do they find within themselves! What inward oppositions are working in the heart, and too often interrupt this holy course of life! What vanity of mind, what sinful appetites, what sensuality and forgetfulness of God, what evil affections, what vicious thoughts and wishes, and tendencies of heart, rise up in contradiction to their honest and professed purposes of virtue and holiness, and lead them astray too often from their duty both to God and man!

Even some of the best of men, who have observed their own hearts, are forced to cry out, *Oh, wretched* creature *that I am!* What vicious principles do *I find in my members warring against* reason and *the law of my mind, and bringing me* too often *into captivity to sin!* Whether St. Paul complained thus concerning himself or no, in his letter to the Romans, *chapter* vii. *verses* 23, 24, or whether he spoke it in the name of mere pretenders to religion, yet as *there is not a just man* upon earth, that doth good, and never sins; so I am persuaded, there is not a man who cannot in some measure take up this complaint, that he is sometimes led astray by sense, appetite, or passion, in greater or lesser instances, against the better dictates of his mind and conscience: There is not a man who may not mourn over himself in this language, *Oh, wretched* creature indeed! *Who shall deliver me* from this native disorder, this inward plague, these evil propensities of my nature? *There is none* perfectly *righteous; no, not one.*

I may sum up the argument contained in the three last considerations in this manner, *viz.*

If great multitudes of mankind are grossly sinful, and if every individual, without

exception, is actually a sinner against the law of his Creator; if sinful propensities and inclinations appear even in youngest years, and every child becomes an actual sinner almost so soon as it is capable of moral or immoral actions; we have just reason to conclude, there is some original and universal degeneracy spread over the whole race of men from their birth: For it is not to be supposed that the wisdom, equity, and goodness of God would ever have produced such a world, wherein every single creature coming out of their Maker's hands in their original state of innocence and full power to obey, should be thus defiled by their own wilful and chosen disobedience.

It has been said, indeed, in opposition to this argument, that if the first man, even Adam, did fall into sin, though he was made innocent and perfect, then among a million of creatures, every one might sin, though he was made as innocent and as perfect as Adam, and that this is a better account of so universal an apostacy. To which I answer,

Answer. There is indeed a bare possibility of this event: But the improbability that every creature should fall into sin, is in the proportion of a million to one. And I prove it thus:

If a million of creatures were made but in an equal probability to stand or fall; and if all the numbers from one to one million inclusively were set in a rank, it is plain that it is a million to one that just any single proposed and determined number of all this multitude should fall by sin: Now the total sum is one of these numbers, that is, the last of them, and consequently, in this way of calculation, it is a million to one against the supposition, that the whole number of men should fall.

And yet further, if they were all made in a far greater probability of standing than falling, which the justice and goodness of God seem to require, then it is much more than a million to one, that all should sin against their Creator without exception. See therefore the weakness of this objection; though I have read several triumphs, in a few pages, supported only by this argument, which has the proportion of more than a whole million to one against it. And yet this argument will grow still ten thousand times stronger, if we suppose ten thousand millions to have lived since the creation.

It has been said again, if the nature of our first parents was not originally corrupt, who committed the first sin, and occasioned the suffering, neither is my nature originally corrupt, who am no ways concerned in the commission of that sin, but only am thereby subjected to suffering. I answer,

Answer. But if the sin of our first parent laid him under guilt, tainted and defiled his own nature, both soul and body, and I am derived from him as my spring and head, I may be thus defiled also, receiving a taint both in soul and body, from the first criminal, as I have shewn afterwards.

Consideration VIII. It may be further argued, that man is a creature fallen from his original state, because he is so far enfeebled or corrupted, that he has not a ready and practical power* to perform the law of his Maker, which yet continues to be written in his heart by nature. Does not this law of reason, and nature, and conscience, require

* *Observe*, I do not assert here, that man has not a remote, speculative, and natural power to obey the law of God, but it is abundantly evident he has not an immediate, proximate, and moral or practical power to do it, since not one of all mankind have ever done it. And let it be observed, that it is the want of this moral disposition, this practical power of perfect obedience to the law of God, which I call insufficience, ability, and impotence, as is shewn at large under Question XIII. and Scripture uses the same language.

And here I desire it may be observed also, that this distinction of sufficient power into natural and moral, will solve the objections derived from a pretence, that "God would never continue mankind under such a law which they have

us "to love God with all our heart and soul, to deal with our neighbour as we think it proper he should deal with us," and to govern our own appetites and passions by rules of reason? Does it not require also, that these things must be done in perfection, and without defect, whether they regard God, our neighbour, or ourselves? Doth it not demand that we should adore and honour, fear and trust in the great God that made us, and obey all that we know to be his will, in a perfect manner? Does it not prescribe constant justice, truth, and goodness, toward our neighbour, without one evil thought, one covetous wish, one envious or malicious act of the will, or the tongue, or the hand, towards him? Does it not demand that our self-government, or our temperance, should not indulge one irregular passion, or appetite? And does it not require, that every one of these lower powers should be perfectly subject to reason and conscience? Now is there any man on earth can say, that he has a ready and practical power to perform all these laws, which his Maker has written in his heart, without any sinful irregularity in thought, word, or deed?

Perhaps, you will insist on it still, that man has still within him those faculties of understanding, and will, and affection, which have a natural power to perform these duties; and perhaps you will prove it too, because whensoever, according to any scheme of religion, a man is made holy, he has no new faculties given him, and therefore these natural faculties which he has are sufficient. I answer,

Answer. If any man be made holy, though he has no new faculties given him, yet their vicious propensities are so far subdued, or taken away, and the sinful tendencies of all his powers are so far changed into that which is virtuous and holy: But it is evident in our present state in this world, that the propensities of the will and affections to that which is evil, are so much superior and prevalent, that I believe there is no man lives one day without breaking this perfect law of his Maker, in thought, word, or deed: And therefore, though by reason of his natural faculties he may have a remote and speculative sufficiency of natural power to obey his Maker's law, yet he has no proximate and practical, or moral sufficiency to perform it, by reason of the perverse and sinful bias of his will and affections, and the weak influences of understanding, reason, and conscience, which are so easily and continually overcome by sinful appetites and inclinations.

It should be considered further, that the outward temptations to which mankind are exposed all around them in the present state, especially in the vigour and perfection of animal life, are evidently too strong to be effectually and constantly resisted and overcome by these enfeebled faculties of reason and conscience; while, at the same time, his will and affections, as well as his appetites and passions, have a powerful bias and propensity to yield to the temptation, and commit sin.

So that if we take a full survey of all these circumstances in which mankind are now

not present sufficient power to obey. This is certain matter of fact, "that there is a law written in the heart or conscience of man," *Rom.* ii 15, which requires greater perfection of obedience than man has a practical or moral power to fulfil, though he may have natural powers equal to the command.

I add yet further, that though many men, by the usual aids of divine grace, may obey this law of God, so far as is necessary, according to the new covenant, and may obtain the favour of God, yet they cannot fulfil it, so far as to obtain justification or acceptance according to this law, which requires perfect obedience, and curses every one that fails in it; *Rom.* ii. 9, and *chapter* iii. 19, 20. *Gal.* iii. 10. And this hope of divine aid, and divine acceptance, is richly sufficient to encourage our utmost diligence in all the duties of obedience, and secure men from despair, and from the neglect of religion and virtue. Thus it appears, that this impotence of men to fulfil the law perfectly, is no discouragement from the utmost diligence in religion.

situated, if we consider their strong propensities to evil within their own nature, the powerful temptations to evil that surround them without, and the feeble efforts of their guardian powers, reason and conscience, to resist all these oppositions, and to break through all these impediments; and if we add here too the constant and daily evidence of all this, by the constant and daily sins of mankind, we must be forced to acknowledge, that his moral and practical powers, in the present state, are by no means proportionate to the law of God, and to his duties, but vastly inferior to them.

Now, would a wise, a just, and a merciful God, who is abundant in goodness, have formed such sensible and intellectual creatures originally by his own hand, in such a wretched estate, that their powers and capacities should be so much below their duties, that they break his law daily and continually; and it may be said, that whatsoever natural faculties they have, yet they have not a ready and practical sufficiency of power to perform it?

Shall it be objected further, that God cannot require more of man than he has given him power to perform, and therefore his law cannot require perfection, if he has not power perfectly to obey it; for the demands of a law must be limited by the powers of the subject, and cannot exceed it? To this I might answer:

Answer I. That the demands of a law must not exceed the powers of an innocent and new-made creature, just as he comes from the hand of God; but when he has some way or other ruined and enfeebled, perverted or broken his original powers, or brought an evil bias into them, may not the law of God still continue to demand such obedience, which he has not a present sufficiency of power to yield or perform? Or I might perhaps better answer thus:

Answer II. That the law of our Maker, in its demands, must be limited by the original, absolute, and natural power of the creature to perform it, which was then also morally and practically sufficient for the purpose; but when a race of beings, by their own folly, have so perverted and discomposed these natural faculties, that they have not an immediate, proximate, and practical power to perform the law of God, this does not destroy nor abate the commands of the law of our Maker: But they stand in full perfection of authority and demand, since the natural powers are still continued, though our perverse inclinations, which is indeed our moral impotence, are continually carrying us to disobey these commands.

Shall it be said again, though we break the laws of our Maker so frequently, yet he knows the weakness of our frame, and he pities and pardons infirm and feeble creatures, where there is any desire to please him, though their disobedience be very frequent. But in answer to this, I would say,

Answer I. It is the new covenant, or covenant of grace, which holds forth God as pitying and pardoning his sinful creatures; not the law of creation or innocence, by which all men are condemned for sin.

Answer II. I would inquire, did God make such creatures so infirm and feeble in their original state, as that they should so frequently and continually offend their Maker, and want forgiveness? Did he give them such a law to govern their actions, as should never, never be fulfilled by any one of them, but should be daily and constantly broken by them; and that the new-made creature should want daily and continual pardon? Would a God, who adjusts the proportions of all things in infinite wisdom, give a law to his creatures which is so disproportionate to their original powers, that even in the state

of their creation they are almost under some sort of necessity of breaking it, and stand in need of daily and repeated forgiveness? Does not all this view of things give us abundant conviction that mankind is now a degenerate being, and not such as it was first created by that wise, that righteous, and that merciful God who made it?

If those who are most unwilling to acknowledge this universal and early depravation of man, would look into themselves daily, and observe all the sinful and irregular turns of their own heart, how ready and propense they are to sin and folly in greater or lesser instances, how soon appetite and passion start up in opposition to reason and conscience, how often they prevail over their better sentiments, how frequently the perfect demands of the law of God are broken by them, how thoughtless and forgetful they are of their divine Maker and Governor, how cold and languishing their affections to what is religious and holy, how little love they have to truth, how little delight in virtue by nature, how averse to commune with God, while they are fond and violent in pursuit of trifles and follies; could any of them think, that they are such innocent and holy creatures, as God at first had created us, and that they have been such from their childhood, or their entrance into the life and state of man? Surely, a little more frequent and accurate observation of their own heart, would lead them into a better acquaintance with themselves, and convince them feelingly, that there was some early degeneracy from the first rectitude of human nature.

Consideration IX. Another proof of the degeneracy and fall of mankind is this, that they have not only lost their innocence and the image of their Maker, and their original sufficiency of power to fulfil the demands of his law, but they also lie evidently under his actual displeasure, which could not be their primæval state. As we have taken a short view of the sins of men, let us also briefly survey the miseries of mankind, and see whether they look like a race of beings, such as their Creator made them, or are partakers of his original favour?

Think of the thousands of rational creatures descending hourly to death and the grave. Among these, a few are destroyed by some sudden stroke; but far the greater part go thither by painful and slow approaches! Death and the grave, a sore punishment! A dark and shameful prison! Which would never have been made for a race of intellectual creatures, persisting in the beauty and honour of their innocence and virtue, and abiding in the original favour of him that gave them life and being. "Death is the wages of sin;" *Rom.* vi. 23; and from this punishment of sin, there is none of the race of men can plead a freedom, or claim a discharge.

If mankind had stood in their original sinless state, can we ever suppose that any of them should have been made sacrifices to death? Much less, that every one should be bound to certain destruction? And especially, that half their race should have been doomed to die before seven years old, that is, before they reach a tenth part of the present age of man, or have done any thing in life worth living for? Did God make rational creatures, to destroy them by millions? Were men at first made for death? Methinks every hillock of mortality in a church-yard, and every grave-stone there, assures us that mankind have lost their innocence.

But let us proceed to other miseries, that attend us in life-time, many of which end in death and dissolution, and all hasten us down to the grave.

Think next of the multitudes that are racked, day and night, on their couches, with extreme torture, by the gout and stone, the cholic and rheumatism, and all manner

of acute and painful diseases; and then say, are these the torments which a merciful God could ever contrive for a sinless creature? Think of the dismal and destructive scenes of warfare and bloodshed, that have, one time or another, overspread all nations: Does not nature furnish this world with woes enough, or does not mankind die fast enough, but they must wound and slaughter each other? Cast your thoughts over a field of battle, where thousands of such noble creatures as man are destroyed like brutes, are slain by mutual hatred, and perish by sharp and bloody strokes, and the fatal engines of death; and many thousands more lie on the cold ground, with their flesh and limbs battered and torn, wounded and panting in extreme anguish, and die by degrees: Are these such scenes of innocence and peace as mankind were made for? Are these the signals of their Maker's love, or of their own original virtue?

Yet again, let us send our thoughts through the long ranks and files of war. What unknown multitudes are bred up to this bloody trade, and sell their lives daily for the price of a few pence, or for a morsel of meat and sustenance! Multitudes are driven by their princes against their wills into the wars, or dragged on by their leaders to destruction and death! What millions are constrained to stand the volley of small-shot in the field of battle, or to venture up to the mouths of cannon in the siege of a town or city! They are forced to hazard their limbs and their lives, and even their eternal interests, by fighting against they not who, and destroying men they know not why. They are put under a necessity of killing their fellow-creatures, or being killed by them, because wild and vicious princes quarrel about the bounds of their dominion, or about some trifles of state and impertinences of honour. Some of them, who have any remains of conscience, are forced to fight against their own best interests of liberty and property, as well as against the interest of God and goodness. Whole nations are thus appointed to slaughter by the tyrannical laws of those that rule over them, in various parts of the world; and sometimes there are but very few in a whole country that are excused from bearing arms and entering into these dismal and deathful circumstances, when their emperors shall tell them that their humour or pleasure requires it. Would this have been the fate of mankind, if they had stood in perfect innocence, or if all nations were now born in their original purity?

Think of the vast numbers that are swallowed up in the mighty waters, by the rage of stormy winds and seas, which are roused to destroy mortals, and pronounce aloud the wrath of heaven! Review a little what immense multitudes have been swept away by the pestilence, or have had their nature and life worn out by the long and tedious agonies of famine! Would famine and pestilence, with all the dismal train of lingering horrors which attend them, have been ever made for innocent creatures, to have thus swept away whole nations of them, of every age and sex, men, women, and children, without distinction?

Think yet again, what numbers of mankind have been crushed into misery and death, in their own dwellings, and buried there by earthquakes, or have had all their bones bruised, their limbs disjointed and broken, and their flesh painfully battered by the fall of houses, and been buried alive in the ruins of whole towns and villages; while their neighbours have been burned or drowned in multitudes, by the dismal eruptions of fire and water, or destroyed terribly by deluges of liquid fire, breaking out of the earth! Survey these scenes of horror, and then say, would a God of goodness and justice treat innocent creatures at this rate, or expose them to these formidable mischiefs?

Carry your thoughts over the seas, to the country of cannibals and other savages, where, by the custom of nations, thousands of their conquered enemies, or prisoners of war, are sometimes cruelly put to death, to pave the road to their own palace with their skulls, or they are offered in sacrifice to their idols; sometimes they are roasted in slow fires, as I before hinted, and tortured and eaten by their barbarous conquerors: Add this to all the former miseries, and then say, whether this world does not look like a province half forsaken of its gracious governor, or almost given up to mischief and misery?

Some perhaps will say here, it is easy to account for a multitude of these miseries, without any universal degeneracy or corruption of human nature. It is but a small part of mankind who are overwhelmed by earthquakes, who are drowned in the seas, who are destroyed by war or famine, who are racked with long and terrible distempers, who are eaten by savages, or put to death by the hands of violence and cruelty; and perhaps these who suffer peculiar afflictions are punished for their own personal iniquities.

Answer. Take a just survey of all the persons who have fallen under these miseries, and there is not the least reason to conclude they have all been sinners above others. Do not the calamities of war, and famine, and pestilence, and earthquakes, and inundations, &c. spread promiscuously without distinction through a whole country at once, and involve the best and worst of men in the same misery and ruin? And is there any ground to imagine, that those spreading devastations make any distinction between greater and lesser sinners? No, by no means. It is sufficiently evident that all persons are liable to them, and whole nations at once suffer by them. Such is the universal degeneracy of human nature, that wheresoever these calamities come, they find none innocent; and it is the general situation of degenerate mankind, under the just displeasure of God that made them, which exposes them all to these destructions.

But to proceed in a survey of the miseries of mankind. Think of the innumerable common misfortunes which attend human life; look into the bills of mortality, observe what multitudes perish by these accidents in one city every week, and infer what a much larger number of these accidents injure the health, the ease, the limbs of mankind, and fill their lives with pain, though they are not brought immediately to the grave. Think of the mischiefs which are continually plotting and contriving in all the towns and villages of the world, whereby perhaps one half of the race of men try to defraud, circumvent, and do injury and mischief to their neighbours; and the bad and the good suffer promiscuously in this world in their possessions and properties, in their comforts of life, in their peace, in their health, and all that is dear to them. Take a view of these extensive and reigning vices and miseries, and then say, whether this world be not a part of the creation of God, which bears plain and signal tokens of the frowns and displeasure of its Maker?

It would add much to the heap of human misery, if we should consider the cutting sorrows which arise from the daily loss of our dearest comforts. What groans and heart-aches and wailings of the living surround the pillows of dying friends and dearer children? What symptoms of piercing and painful distress attend their remains when they are conveyed to the grave? And by such losses all the comforts of future life become disrelishing, and every new scene of sorrow is imbittered with double gall.

Let it be observed, that in the sorrows, miseries, and deaths of mankind round the

world, especially in the more civilized part of it, there is scarce one person sick, or in pain, miserable or dying, but several others sustain a considerable share of misery by the strong ties of nature, or of interest, the dear bonds of friendship, and the tender and sympathizing powers which are mingled in our composition. This diffuses a personal calamity through whole families, this multiplies human sorrows and miseries into an endless number, and makes us justly inquire, can all this be contrived to torment innocence and holiness, or to punish creatures who continue such as God made them at first?

It would still swell the load, if we bring in the many teazing vexations and cutting disappointments which arise from the falsehood of pretended friends, and from the cruelty of kindred, from whom we expected nothing but benevolence and love, together with the everlasting disquietudes that are rising in some families hourly from little crossing occurrences of life. Can this be a state of happiness, where we meet with perpetual contradiction to our opinions and to our wills, which awaken the soul too often into rage and impatience, and ruffle the spirits of most men?

Add to all this the inward anguish that springs from all our own uneasy and unruly passions of every kind: And where is the breast that has not some of these uneasy passions born with it, and reigning in it, or at least frequently making their assaults upon our peace? Bring in here all the wrath and resentment kindled in the hearts of men, all the envy and malice that burns within, all the imaginary fears and the real terrors of future distress coming upon us, all the rage and despair of lost blessings that were put within our hopes, and all the vicious and ungovernable ferments of animal nature, which torment the spirit all the day, and forbid our nightly repose. Would these things ever have happened, if man had continued in favour with his Maker, and had not been almost abandoned to his own folly, and in a great measure given up to misery?

Suppose it should be objected here, against all this reasoning, in some such manner as this: It is granted that men may make sorrows for themselves, and may be punished by their follies, if they choose to create their own miseries: But let us compare together all the real necessary sorrows which any man suffers, and the comforts which he enjoys, and when we have put them into the balance, let us remember, that, so far as these comforts reach, they will answer for an equal share of sorrows and calamities, and absolve the justice of God from treating his innocent creatures amiss. Then all the over-balancing sorrows may be esteemed but necessary even for an innocent race of beings to sustain, in a state of trial, in order to future rewards or punishments: And the great God well knows how to reward all that over-balance of sufferings hereafter, which every man sustains here beyond the proportion of his comforts. In answer to this,

Answer. I would survey the sinful and wretched inhabitants of this world round the globe, and then humbly inquire, doth one quarter of mankind behave so well in this world, in their state of trial, as to give any observing person reason to expect, that they shall ever partake of rewards hereafter? Is there found among mankind such a dutiful and obedient conduct towards God, or such a life of strict virtue and goodness towards their neighbour, as to entitle one fourth part of men to the rewards of futurity, and consequently to any equal recompence hereafter, for the former over-balance of their sorrows here? And if not, how then shall this same over-balance of calamities and

miseries be accounted for? It is confessed, that it was inflicted on them as innocent creatures in a state of trial, and therefore justice requires that they should have a recompence for these over-balancing sorrows, which yet they are never likely to receive.

Upon the whole, therefore, we cannot well impute the superior sorrows of mankind merely to such a state of probation; but they are rather to be accounted for as the effects of some universal degeneracy, and the just displeasure of the righteous Creator and Governor of this world.

But to make this appear yet plainer, I proceed to the next consideration.

Consideration X. Not only those who are grown up in the practice of iniquity, who may be supposed to be punished for their own sins and follies, but even all mankind in their earliest infancy, are under some tokens of the displeasure of their Maker, before they become actual and personal transgressors; before they know any thing of moral good or evil, or can come into a state of trial.

In the very youngest hours of life, before children can be said to perform rational actions, or to commit actual sins, they are subject to a thousand miseries; which shews them to be a race of beings out of favour with their Maker, and under his displeasure even from their birth: For can we think a God of perfect goodness, wisdom, and equity, would bring such infant beings into existence, to feel such calamities in the complete innocence of spotless nature?

What anguish and pain are infants sometimes exposed to, even as they are coming into the world, and as soon as they are entered into it! What agonies await their birth! What numerous and acute maladies, what deplorable diseases, are ready to attack them! What gripes, what convulsions of nature, what cutting anguish, what pangs and inward torments, which bring some of them down to death, as soon as they have seen the light of this world a few hours or days! And if they survive the first three or four months of danger, what unknown torture do they find in the breeding of their teeth, and other maladies of infancy, which can be told only by shrieks and tears, and that for whole days and nights together, while they are lingering on the very borders of death! What additional pains and sorrows do they sustain sometimes by the negligence or poverty of their mothers, and by the cruelty of nurses! What sore bruises and unhappy injuries, whereby many of them are brought down to the grave, either on a sudden, or by slow and painful degrees!

Do we not shudder with a sort of sympathy and compassion, when we read of children falling into the fire, and lying there in helpless screams till their limbs are burned off, or their lives expire in the flames? Or when they drop into scalding vessels of some boiling liquid, whereby they resign their souls in extreme anguish? Are not all our tenderest powers shocked and pained, when we hear of infants left on their couches, or in their cradles, by poor parents, for an hour or two, while dogs or hogs have gnawed off their flesh from their bones, and they have been found in dying agonies and blood? And what shall we say of whole nations, in older times, or the Hottentots in our age, who expose their children in the woods when they cannot, or will not, maintain them, to be torn and devoured by any savage beast that passes by? Are these little young creatures counted perfectly innocent and guiltless in the eyes of that God, who by his providence leaves them to be exposed to so dismal a fate?

Add to all this the common calamities in which these infants are involved, when fires,

or earthquakes, or pestilences rage through a whole town or city, and multitudes of them, being helpless, perish with extreme pain. And there are a thousand other accidents that attend these little creatures, whereby their members or their natural powers receive dismal injuries, and perhaps they drag on life with blindness, deafness, lameness, or distortion of body or limbs; sometimes they languish on to manhood, and sometimes old age, under miseries and sore calamities, which began almost as soon as their being, and which are only ended by death.

Now as these sorrows and death cannot be sent upon them, in a way of correction for their personal and actual sins, for they have none, so neither are they sent for the trial of their virtue, or as any part of a moral state of probation; for they have no reason in exercise, no knowledge of good and evil, and are incapable of virtue as well as vice, or any moral probation, in their early infancy and state of ignorance; yet we see multitudes of these little miserable beings; and are they treated as the innocent harmless creatures of a God of love and compassion? Amidst all these surrounding scenes of danger and distress, do they look like young favourites of heaven? Or rather, do they not seem to be a little sort of criminals under some general curse and punishment?

If mankind had stood in their original innocence, surely their infant offspring would have entered into the world under some general word of blessing. The God who made the first parents of mankind must certainly have blessed them in several other respects, as well as in saying, *Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth;* Gen. i. 28. And their infants would have been born like little young angels, ever easy and smiling in a perfection of innocence, and in circumstances of pleasure: And they would have grown up by many little efforts of goodness to the fuller knowledge and love of their Maker, and the practice of every virtue, surrounded with the comforts and satisfactions of an infant state, and guarded from every mischief by a kind and watchful providence.

But, alas! the case of children is quite the reverse of this purity and peace. Survey the dangers and miseries just mentioned, and say, are these provided to receive young angels just entering into being? Were these maladies, and griefs, and groans prepared to seize a race of little angels coming into our world? If seraphs and cherubs had been made to propagate in our manner, would the great and good God have provided such scenes of pain and peril, disease and death, to have met their young blooming offspring at the very gates of life, and to have attended them all their way; or would he have sent them so soon, and in such vast multitudes, to death and darkness? Would God have ever appointed a race of infant angels to have entered into being in the midst of such infelicities, and have sent more than half of them to destruction again, before they arrived at the exercise of their intellectual powers, or had seen, or done, or enjoyed any thing worth living for? Yet this is the wretched case of the offspring of mankind in every generation.

It has been objected here, that these sufferings of children may be for the correction and punishment of the sins of their parents. But the answer is evident, *viz.*

Answer. Can a God of equity and justice inflict such sufferings on children without any such constitution whereby the sins of parents may be, as it were, translated, or imputed to the children, as I have shewn in the following parts of this book?

Besides, many of the parents of these suffering children may be dead, or absent, so

as never to know it: How can it then be a correction or punishment for their parents' sin, any other ways than as it is a general punishment for the sin of their first parent?

I know some have pretended to account for all these calamities of the infant race of mankind, by saying roundly, that God rewards them sufficiently in another world for a few years pain here, when he takes them to heaven. But I answer,

Answer. Are all children which die secured of heaven, either by reason or Scripture? If the infant seed of Abraham and his pious followers, are taken to dwell with God, as their God, are the children of wicked parents as happy too? Are you sure they are not subject to any pains hereafter? Or that their souls are not annihilated at death? And upon either of these suppositions there is no recompence for the pains they suffer.

Besides, a multitude of these grow up to mature years, and if they should prove wicked at last, and be sent to hell, what recompence have they for their infant-sufferings? Or will you say, that God actually punished them before they had sinned, and while they were innocent, because he knew before-hand they would sin? Is this God's way of dealing with his creatures? Doth reason, or doth Scripture give us any hint of this kind? And yet further, How can any creature know what they are punished for? And what wise or good design can this their punishment obtain, when no creature can know what they are punished for in their infancy, if it be not for some universal degeneracy of all the race?

But because I would answer all the objections I can think of, which have the appearance of reason, I would proceed in this work.

Against all these representations of human infelicity and misery, in older or younger years, perhaps, some persons may make this remonstrance: Is not the great God infinite in goodness? Do not *his tender mercies* spread *over all his works?* Does not that Moses, the jewish lawgiver, who has been cited and called to attest the miseries of man, does he not represent *God* as *merciful and gracious, abundant in goodness?* Exodus xxxiv. 6. How is this consistent with such miseries reigning among his creatures? I answer,

Answer. If we consider mankind as a sinful degenerate part of God's creation, it is most abundant goodness that they have any comforts left, and that their miseries are not doubled: Now Moses and the jewish writers do consider mankind as fallen from God, and so his goodness is evident in a thousand instances; though it must be confessed, there are also thousands of instances of his just hatred of sin, and his righteous punishments scattered all round this world, among all nations and all ages of men.

Some have been so weak as to reckon up a large catalogue of the instances of divine bounty and goodness in this lower world, and add thereto the revelation and proposal of his saving grace; and they would make this as evident a proof that mankind stands in the favour of God, as all the other instances of the miseries of human life can be any proof of an universal degeneracy of men, and the anger of God against them. But it is very easy to reply,

Reply. That the goodness of God may incline him to bestow a thousand bounties and graces upon criminals and their whole race: But I think his justice and goodness will not suffer him to inflict miseries in such an universal manner, where there has been no sin to deserve them, either in parents or children, in head or members, in

themselves or their representatives, as will appear in what follows hereafter; but I would not anticipate my design, and bring in this before its time.

Consideration XI. If we collect and put together all these scenes of iniquity, folly, and wretchedness, even among the better sort of men, as well as the worst, and that even in younger years, as well as in more advanced age, and take a survey of them in their total sum, it is sufficiently evident that creatures lying in such sinful and miserable circumstances, disobedient to God, and under his displeasure, are not such as they came out of the hands of their Creator, who is wise and righteous, holy and good. His wisdom, which is all harmony and order, would never suffer him to frame such a vast multitude, such a whole species of beings, under such wild and innumerable disorders both natural and moral: His holiness would never permit him to create beings with such innate and powerful principles of iniquity; nor would his infinite goodness allow him to produce a whole rank and order of creatures in such circumstances of pain, agony, torment, and death, if they were to be esteemed his pure, innocent, and holy workmanship, just come out of his sacred hands.

Can we ever reasonably suppose, that the holy and blessed God would originally design and frame a whole world of intelligent and rational creatures in such circumstances, as that every one of them coming into being, according to the laws of nature, in long successive ages, in different climates, of different tempers and constitutions, under different influences, having greater or lesser advantages for wisdom, virtue, and happiness, and in ten thousand thousand different stations and conditions of life; I say, can we suppose that they should all break the laws of their reason, and defile themselves with sin in greater or less degrees, should all feel their appetites and passions so often contrary to reason, and yet prevailing over it, that they should all so far offend against their Maker, all become guilty in his sight, and be all exposed, more or less, to his displeasure, to pain, and misery, and mortality, without one single instance or exception that we know of to the contrary? If mankind were such creatures as God at first made them, can we suppose that not one man, among so many millions, should make so right and proper an use of his reason and conscience as to avoid sin and death? Can we think, that this should be the universal consequent of their original state and constitution, as they are framed by the hand of a wise, and holy, and merciful God? This, I say, is such an absurd thing, as no reasonable man can suppose. Surely God made man upright and happy, and all these mischiefs could never come directly from our Creator's hand. Perhaps, here, it may be objected again,

Objection. That this universal condemnation of mankind, as it were by wholesale, and laying them all under such a charge of guilt and wretchedness without exception, is more than our experience or observation will allow. It is acknowledged that many are now guilty, and many are miserable, though they were born innocent, and not degenerate: But still a far greater part of men have more moral good than evil in them, and have more pleasure than they have pain; and therefore, upon the whole, mankind must not be pronounced a sinful and a miserable being: And if God has appointed such a constitution as is best in the whole view of things, and is favourable to the majority of the human race, or the bulk of the world; this is sufficient to vindicate the justice of God; and then the few sufferers have no reason to complain. Do we not find it thus under the best of human laws and constitutions, that some persons who were once innocent will grow wicked? And that even some innocent persons may be

laid under unavoidable hardships or sufferings? Yet all lawgivers account those to be just constitutions, which provide for the welfare of the bulk of the subjects, though here and there will be an unhappy instance of guilt and misery.

To this objection I would offer these three answers:

Answer I. In order to pronounce a man miserable, it is granted, he must have more pain than pleasure; but in order to pronounce a man a sinner, there is no necessity that his moral evil should exceed his good, or his vices transcend his virtues. If a man had a hundred virtues, one vice in the sight of God would pronounce him a criminal; one evil action would break the law of his Maker, and lay him under his Maker's just displeasure. "He that keeps almost all the law of God, and offends in one point," affronts that authority which requires all obedience: So that all the race of man are certainly under this condemnation, that they are sinners every one of them; and consequently, exposed to the anger of him that made them. And thus, with regard to their sinfulness, my argument stands in full force.

As for misery, let it be allowed for the present, though it is by no means granted, that there are many persons whose pleasures exceed their uneasinesses; yet, it is certain that there are great numbers also of mankind, whose pains or uneasinesses, wisely and justly compared with their pleasures, will appear far to exceed them; and it is hard to say, how this should come to pass, if mankind were all innocent and happy by nature, as they are now born into the world. Their universal sinfulness, therefore, and the misery of multitudes, must conclude them all under some spreading degeneracy.

Answer II. What though the makers of human laws are not able to frame such constitutions, in every case, which shall certainly secure happiness to all the innocent; this is because their narrow views of things, and their short foresight of future events, will not enable them in making laws to provide against all future inconveniencies, nor to secure the innocent always from injury: But we must not think, nor speak thus of the divine Lawgiver, the Creator and the Governor of all things: He grasps at once all possibles, as well as all futures, in his present view, and therefore he can guard against any injury that might befal innocent beings; nor will divine justice, in my opinion, suffer any mischief to light upon any individual innocent without equal recompence, for *the Judge of all the earth will do right;* Gen. xviii. 25.

Answer III. Though the bulk of mankind, in the present constitution of things, could be proved to be happy, by their pleasures exceeding their pains, yet this gives no manner of satisfaction to any one individual, who suffers misery under the same constitution without any demerit. Every intelligent and innocent individual has the same right to his Maker's regard, in point of justice, as if there were no other creature but he: And the advantage, or happiness of the majority, is no reason at all, why any one innocent individual should suffer any injury or injustice by the constitution which God has made.

And therefore if God had constituted any thing, in his creation or providence, which would bring the least injury, or unjust pain, or loss on any individual, sensible, or intelligent being entirely innocent, I think his justice would oblige him to interpose, and to prevent that injury, or to compensate it with some superior good. If any one therefore, whether man or child, among the race of mortals, and especially if a considerable number of them, have more pain than pleasure, they must be supposed to be involved in some guilt, or some fatal degeneracy, which may give just occasion to their misery.

Consideration XII. To give a little further force to this argument, after the survey of all these pains, sorrows, and miseries, let us consider what poor, low, sorry pleasures the bulk of mankind are in pursuit of, to relieve them under this train of wretchedness, and then ask, whether these are suited to a race of intelligent and innocent creatures? Let us stoop down a moment and cast a glance at the sports of children, from five to fifteen years of age: What have all these little toys and fooleries in them, that would be fit for young angels dressed in flesh and blood? Would so many years of early life have been wasted in such mean and trifling diversions, by a race of holy and rational beings? And how much early iniquity and mischief, in thought, word, and action, is mingled with these sportings, among the younger tribes of mankind, God only knows.

As for the manly years of life, what are the greatest parts of the delights of men, but either foolish and irrational satisfactions, or downright sinful? What are the pleasures of the rich and the great, to relieve them under the common sorrows of life? If it be not profuse luxury and intemperance, which is often the case, yet is it not grandeur and magnificence, furniture and equipage, finery of dress and gay appearances, whereby they take a pride to shew themselves superior to the rest of their species? And when they shine in silks of various dye, and blaze amidst the splendour of gold and jewels; this is the vain satisfaction of most of them, to look down upon their fellow-creatures with airs of vanity and contempt, and build up a swelling idea of themselves, as though their outward clothing and appearance added real excellence to their character. Would innocent and rational creatures have made this a matter of their boast and pleasure, "My coat is gayer than yours, and I have more shining things round about me than you have!"

Others, again, in the midst of the common calamities of life, divert themselves with gaming, and with childish sports. Whether cards and dice be the utensils of their childish play, to divert their troubles and pass away time, or, whether these implements be the engines of covetousness, to deprive their neighbour of what he possesses; yet, under both these aspects, they are but a sorry relief for a race of holy and innocent beings, should they fall under some unhappy accidents. How trifling are these sports, where mere delight and diversion are sought? But if the design be lucre, how is the game mingled with covetous hopes and wishes, with uneasy fears, with the working of wretched inward passions, which sometimes break out into wrath and fury, and vexations under losses and disappointments?

Again, what multitudes are there, that drench themselves in gross sensualities, as their chief delight! They make "a god of their belly," they indulge their appetite in every nicer dish, till they have overloaded nature, and make haste to disease and death. They drink and swill, till they have lost their reason, and lay themselves lower than the brutes that perish. They drown their cares in wine, or in coarser liquors, or they bury them in all manner of sensual impurities. Are these the delights that would have been chosen and sought by mankind, had they continued a race of holy and innocent beings, as their God at first made them?

Others there are, that release themselves from the toils and sorrows of life, by gadding abroad, and mixing with trifling and impertinent company. Some delight in low and wanton jests, and their satisfaction lies in foolish merriment, in mean and trifling conversation, a little above the chattering of monkeys in a wood, or the chirping of crickets upon a hearth, but not always so innocent.

And there is another set of the sons and daughters of Adam, who are never so well

satisfied, as when they are railing at their neighbours, and tossing scandal abroad; they take every one's character to pieces, and set it in a hateful light. From principles of mingled pride and envy, they are hurried on, with pleasure, to murder the reputation of their fellows: They cast abroad firebrands, and arrows tipped with slander and poison, and say, Am I not in sport? They delight to tear their neighbour's good name without mercy. This is their mirth and recreation, this their satisfaction and joy; these are their reliefs against the common miseries of human nature, and their chosen methods to pass away the tiresome hours of life.

But would a race of innocent beings, if they ever happened to meet with any accident of pain or sorrow, fly to such sort of mean and foolish, or criminal refuges as these are? Would they pursue such gluttonous and drunken pleasures, such vain or vile delights? Would they become rivals for happiness with the four-footed beasts of the earth, and aim at no higher felicities? Or would they sport themselves, as devils do, in accusing their fellow-creatures? Surely, if we take a due survey of the very pleasures of the bulk of mankind, as well as of their sorrows, we may learn from thence, that we are, by no means, such creatures as our primitive creation made us, but there is some great and universal degeneracy spread over all the generations of men.

Consideration XIII. If I were to add one more proof of the general ruin and degenerate state of human nature, I would observe, how we are all posting to death and the grave, and every one of us are succeeding our neighbours, in our proper turns, into some unknown state, some invisible and future world, and we profess to believe this too; and yet how exceeding few are there amongst mankind, who are solicitous about this great and awful futurity! Though we are exposed to so many miseries, sins, and follies, in the present life, and are hastening visibly and hourly to the end of it; yet how few are there that make any careful preparation for a better state than this, or that seek to acquire a temper fit for the superior pleasures of a world of spirits, even though they believe this better world! What multitudes are running down daily, and directly to death and darkness, and speeding to an endless duration in some unknown country, without any earnest inquiries and solicitudes of soul about their manner of existence there, and their final fate and doom, when this life is at an end! They walk over the busy stage of life, their souls are filled with the concerns of mortality, they toil and labour, or they play and trifle awhile here, so far as the burdens and calamities of life will permit them, and then they plunge, with reluctance, into an unseen and strange world, where they will meet with a just and holy God, whose wisdom will assign them a place and portion suited to their own character: But we have reason to fear, by their sinful behaviour among men, that that portion, and that place, to which the bulk of mankind are hastening, is far distant from the favour of the God that made them, and from other holy and happy creatures, whom he has framed for the inhabitants of those regions. Thus far our fears of their future misery are but too justly awakened.

Now is it possible, if we were a race of pure and innocent beings, made for immortality in some other world, that God should suffer the bulk of mankind to remain so ignorant and thoughtless of that future state, into which we are all hastening? Would a good and gracious God leave a race of such creatures as he made them, in such a stupid insensibility of their eternal interests, so unsuited to the felicities of an immortal spirit, and so negligent of all preparations for them? Should some blessed angel of heaven, who had never known any thing of our earth, come down amongst us, or

some inhabitant of an innocent globe, some stranger to our world, descend from one of God's holy dominions on high, and spend a month or two in a survey of all the iniquities and miseries of the tribes of mankind, can we imagine he would pronounce us holy or happy? Could he ever believe the holy and wise, the righteous and the gracious God, ever put such workmanship as we are, out of his hands for new-made creatures? Would he not immediately conclude, there are so many signs of guilt and wretchedness among us, as constrain him to confess some universal degeneracy and desolation fallen upon us, which is utterly unknown to the holy and happy provinces of the empire of the blessed God?

Upon this whole survey, I think our own reason must needs join in the same mournful confession, that some universal apostacy from the laws of our creation, some criminal disorder and wretchedness, has some way or other come upon the whole race of mankind, since they first came out of the hands of their Maker: There must be some spreading poison, which has tainted our nature, which renders us so prone to sin, and so lamentably guilty, so miserable in the present state, so thoughtless of the future, and so unprepared for it. There must be some general revolt of the race of man from their Creator, whereby they have disturbed, disordered, and broken their original natures and powers, whereby they have ruined their innocence and their peace, and raised a most unhappy empire of tyrannical and vexing passions upon the ruin of them; whereby they have provoked the anger of their kind, wise, and holy Maker, and their righteous Governor, and whereby they become exposed to such wretched circumstances even in their infancy and childhood, as well as when they grow to years of greater understanding: I think it is evident that a righteous and wise Governor, even though we should not consider his infinite goodness, would not suffer creatures to come into such deplorable circumstances, if they were not regarded by him in some sort as criminals: He would not inflict so much natural evil, that is, pain and misery, and spread it through such a vast province of his dominion, so universally without exception, nor suffer it to be inflicted in the course of his providence, if it were not with a regard to some general moral evil, that is, sin.

Will some persons again complain, that in representing the sorrows and miseries of mankind, I have here acted the part of a satirist, rather than of a philosopher, and have summed together all the pains, mischiefs, and distresses of human life, without giving a due place to the pleasures and delights of it, or bringing them into the account?

I confess that the great God hath furnished this world, which is the habitation of man, with multitudes of grateful and pleasing objects, to regale his senses, to feast his appetites, and to excite his most agreeable passions, which might have been part of his happiness in a state of innocence. But now the unreasonable strength and violent efforts of these appetites, the sinful bent and bias of his will, together with the weak resistance against vicious excesses which is made by his reason and conscience, turn every one of these pleasures into real dangers and snares. There are but few who indulge these delights, without dishonouring their nature, defiling their souls with sin, and breaking the laws of God; and in the midst of so degenerate a state, their most tempting satisfactions and delights do, in a great measure, lose the nature of good or benefit, because of their constant danger of plunging men into guilt and misery.

Shall I be told again, that there are multitudes of men, whose easy and peaceful

circumstances are much superior to their troubles and sorrows, and these would, upon the whole, be pronounced happy, even if there were no future state?

Though I have answered this already, by shewing that the happiness of the major part does not vindicate that constitution which leaves any individuals under misery, without some original demerit, yet I will answer here, more directly,

Answer. That if the greatest part of men could see things in their true light, as God and angels regard them, surely the bulk of the world would be found on the miserable side, whatever particular exceptions might be found among individuals: And this, in general, would teach us that the inhabitants of this world are not a race of happy beings, such as they would have been, if they had been innocent, or such as they were when they came first out of the hands of their Maker?

But the inference of our wretchedness, or ruin, may be pronounced with much more strength and universality, concerning this world, if we join the sins and the miseries of mankind together. If we unite in one view, all the criminal, as well as the painful circumstances, which I have represented in these foregoing propositions, I think it must be granted, that there is some universal ruin and degeneracy spread all over human nature, and every individual helps to complete this mournful sentence, and confirm the truth of it, "that man is a sinful and unhappy being."

And methinks, when I take my justest survey of this lower world, with all the inhabitants of it, I can look upon it no otherwise, than as a huge and magnificent structure in ruins, and turned into a prison and a lazar-house, or hospital, wherein lie millions of criminals and rebels against their Creator, under condemnation to misery and death; who are at the same time sick of a mortal distemper, and disordered in their minds even to distraction: Hence proceed those infinite follies and vices which are continually practised here, and the righteous anger of an offended God is visible in ten thousand instances. Yet there are proclamations of divine grace, health, and life, sounding amongst them, either with a louder voice, or in gentler whispers, though very few of them take any notice thereof. But out of this great prison, this infirmary, there is, here and there, one, who is called powerfully by divine grace, and attends to the offers of reconciliation, and complies with the proposals of peace: His sins are pardoned, he is healed of his worst distemper; and though his body is appointed to go down to the dust for a season, yet his soul is taken upwards to a region of blessedness, while the bulk of these miserable and guilty inhabitants perish in their own wilful madness, and by the just executions of divine anger. Before I finish this general head, I would ask leave to make one remark, and that is,

Remark. What an unreasonable thing is it to deny this doctrine of the universal depravity and corruption of mankind, and renounce it in every degree, when it appears so evident to our eyes, and to our ears, and to our daily and constant observation and experience, in so many thousand instances! Is it not almost like winking against the light, since the premises are so strong and glaring, and the inference so powerfully demands our assent?

I must profess, that with all the diligence and impartiality with which I am capable of reviewing what I have written on this universal degeneracy of mankind, I am not conscious that I have made a false representation of this matter, or aggravated it beyond truth. The innumerable miseries, follies, and madness of mankind, which in various

forms strike our eyes, our ears, and our thoughts, from day to day, confirm my sentiments of the doctrine of some original and universal fall of man from the purity and glory of his creation.

And what is the chief temptation that leads some men to deny this doctrine? Is it not because they cannot give a satisfactory account how to solve some of the difficulties that attend it? Many of the heathen philosophers believed it from their own experience, and their daily survey of mankind, though they were utterly at a loss how to account for it: And what if we could never assign any sufficient and satisfactory reason and cause for it, or shew how this spreading degeneracy began, or how it came to take place so universally amongst men? What if we are perplexed and still at a loss to satisfy our own inquiries, how all this guilt and mischief came upon us; must we therefore deny what we see, and hear, and feel daily?

Can we account for all the secret things in the creation of God, in the world of meteors and minerals, the vegetables of the field, or the brutes of the earth, or the animal body of man? Does any man refuse to believe that the infinite variety of plants and flowers, in all their beauteous colours and forms, grow up out of the same dark and dirty soil, because he doth not know all the secret springs of their vegetation? Do men doubt of the truth of a loadstone's drawing iron to itself, and making a needle point to the north, because they cannot find out the way of its operation? Are we not sure that our food nourishes our bodies, and medicines relieve our pains, though we are utterly at a loss to tell all the ferments and motions of those atoms by which our nourishment is performed, or our diseases healed? Can we account for all the darknesses and appearing difficulties and confusions among the events of providence? Can we discover all the reasons of the wise conduct of God among his creatures? No surely, we cannot pretend to it: And yet since these matters of fact, and these events, are obvious to all our senses, do we deny and refuse to believe these things which are evident in creation and providence, and which are communicated to us by so many springs and mediums of knowledge, merely because we cannot account for the original and secret causes or reasons of them? Or because we cannot reconcile some crossing appearances, and jarring apprehensions that attend them? Why then should this universal degeneracy and ruin of human nature be denied, though we cannot remove every objection that attends it?

And yet if we will search faithfully into the causes and springs of this matter, so far as our natural reason, assisted by the light of revelation, will enable us, we may hope to find some solution of those hard questions, which may give a degree of satisfaction to humble and modest minds, though perhaps not sufficient to silence every curious and unreasonable cavil.

QUESTION II.

HOW CAME THIS GENERAL DEGENERACY, VICE, AND MISERY, TO OVERSPREAD MANKIND IN ALL NATIONS, AND IN ALL AGES?

To find a complete and satisfactory answer to this inquiry, is not a very easy thing. It was a vexing question among the ancient schools of the heathen philosophers, whence

evil came first among mankind? And though they had many guesses and loose conjectures, yet none of them could give an account of this matter, to satisfy the minds of studious men. And if we should not hit upon such a solution of this difficulty now, as may on every side make all things lie quite straight and easy, yet if we can but propose a way to solve it, which may maintain the honour of God, and justify his conduct in a good degree, we may expect the reader should be candid in his censures, where the matter of fact is so evident, and yet the manner of accounting for it is so difficult that it has employed the wisdom of great and learned men in all ages with so doubtful a success.

To find an answer to this question, we shall not immediately run into revelation and Scripture; though doubtless, we have the most certain and satisfactory account of it given us there; yet since what the Scripture says of this matter is so short, and is to be derived chiefly from the third chapter of the book of Genesis, and the fifth chapter to the Romans, and from some few other general hints that are scattered up and down in the Bible, let us try whether we cannot, by a train of reasonings, with a little help from Scripture, find out some clew that will lead us into the spring and original of this sinful and miserable state; and afterward we will inquire whether or no this very clew of reasoning, this track of guilt and misery, be not the same which Scripture more directly points out to us, and strongly confirms by all its sacred and divine discoveries on this subject?

In order to trace out this matter by reasoning, let us begin according to the following propositions:

Proposition I. This general degeneracy of mankind, so far as I can judge, can come upon them but by one of these three ways; either, 1. That the souls of all men existed in a former state, and sinned against their Maker there, and are sent to dwell in bodies in this world, attended with such unhappy circumstances of sin and misery, either as a natural consequent of, or as a punishment for their former sins in some other world. Or, 2. That one original parent of them all, sinned against his Maker, and sustained the miseries consequent upon it, in his own person first, and when he became a father he spread a sinful and miserable nature through all his race and offspring by mere propagation. Or, 3. Some original person stood before God, as a common federal head and representative of mankind, upon condition of bringing happiness or misery on all the race, according as he behaved well or ill; and through his disobedience, sin and misery came upon all whose head he was, or whom he represented. If the two first will not solve the difficulty, we shall be constrained to take in the last. Let us see how far each will go.

Proposition II. This present wretched state of things could not arise from the particular personal sin of all single souls in a former state, before they came into this world: This present universal misery and wretchedness could never be appointed as a punishment to us for our former personal offences against our Maker; for we know nothing of any such former state, or former offences; we have not the least idea or remembrance of it. Now personal guilt cannot be properly punished by the all-knowing and just God, where the sinner has no consciousness nor remembrance of the crime. There must be the same mind, the same spirit, the same intelligent self, or person, conscious both of the past personal sin, and of the present punishment, to make it

appear to be a proper instance of the anger of God for their sin; otherwise the ends of personal punishment cannot be answered, sinning creatures will not be made to see the justice of their punisher, nor can they condemn themselves as justly deserving such misery. Without this consciousness and remembrance, all our miseries would be nothing but afflictive evils brought on us by our Creator, not as personal criminals, but as mere creatures, and consequently not agreeable to the goodness and equity of a God.

Proposition III. If this sinful and miserable condition of men cannot be supposed to arise from their own personal sins, in a pre-existent state, we may inquire then, in the next place, whether it may not be derived from some original parent of our race, who, sinning against God, lost his own innocence, and therewith lost his habit or principles of virtue and goodness; he was exposed to the displeasure of his Maker, and fell under just and grievous miseries.

Such a primitive sinner, if he proceeded to propagate his offspring according to the common rules or laws of nature, must communicate to them such a sinful nature as he had himself, and they will stand exposed to the natural effects of his sin, as well as to all following penal miseries for their own sins. The same irregular ferments of flesh and blood, and such corrupt appetites and vicious passions, will be found in them also; which still grew stronger before the young creatures grew up so far as to exercise their reason. And when by degrees they came to know good and evil, and to be capable of actual sin, these vicious propensities did generally, if not always, overcome their rational faculties, did prevail upon their wills to a frequent actual compliance, and led them away effectually to sin against their Maker, and so to expose themselves more and more to his displeasure, and to confirm their own habits of sin.

And thus every one of the race of man, in their successive seasons of life, might become personally vicious, or deprived of the holy image of God, by their descending from vicious parents, and were deprived of the favour of God by their own actual compliances with these vicious propensities of nature, that is, by actual iniquities. I think it may be granted, that this supposition will solve the difficulty in some measure, and will go a great way toward an answer to the present inquiry.

Proposition IV. But still this, in my opinion, seems hardly sufficient to account for the miseries which come upon children from their very birth, for the pains, and agonies, and dying groans, and death itself, in their infant state, before they are capable of knowing or doing good and evil, or of committing actual sins: And the reason I give for my opinion is this; these tendencies or propensities towards evil in the infant state, even though the soul, or will, complies with them, while there is no possible knowledge of a law or duty, can hardly be called actual sins: Nor can children, while incapable of proper virtue or vice, merit such pains and agonies of themselves as they often suffer. And I can scarce suppose they would be thus punished or tormented by a righteous or wise Governor in their infant age, when they cannot possibly commit actual sin, nor have any knowledge of good or evil, merely upon the account of the necessary propagation of a sinful nature to them from their parents, since they come into this state by that original law of creation and propagation, which a kind and wise Creator appointed to his innocent creatures. I cannot account for their being treated as sinners, unless they were some way involved in guilt or sin, as soon as they are born: And I

do not see how this can be, unless they have * sin some way imputed to them by their interest in, and communion with some common federal head, surety, or representative, who hath actually sinned.

Proposition V. I might add also, that this natural propagation of sinful inclinations from a common parent by a law of creation, seems difficult to be reconciled with the justice and goodness of God, unless we suppose that some such legal or federal guilt and condemnation came upon the race of man by the misbehaviour of a common surety or head. It seems exceeding hard to suppose that such a righteous and holy God, the Creator, who is also a being of such infinite goodness, should, by a powerful law and order of creation, which is now called nature, appoint young intelligent creatures to come into being in such unhappy and degenerate circumstances, liable to such intense pains and miseries, and under such powerful tendencies and propensities to evil by the mere law of propagation, as should almost unavoidably expose them to ten thousand actual sins as they grow up, if they were not born under some judicial sentence of God as a Governor, on the account of moral evil or sin; which moral evil must be before committed, either by themselves or by some representative.

It is hard to suppose, that the creating power and decree of God, or his law of nature for propagation, should place mankind in such a situation as to render them unavoidably sinful and miserable in a degree, before they have any personal sin or guilt to deserve it, unless you suppose them to be some way interested or involved in something of guilt, or sin, which was derived from a common head, surety, or representative, who might be appointed by some wise and righteous constitution to act for them.†

Proposition VI. Upon the whole view of things, therefore, I know not how to resolve this difficulty, but by supposing this universal sinfulness and misery of our whole species to arise from the sin and guilt of some person, who was both a primitive parent or natural fountain of our race, and who was also set up as a common head or legal representative of all mankind: And that he, by sinning against his Maker, lost his own principles of virtue and goodness, exposed himself and his posterity, whom he naturally produced, and whom he legally represented, to the displeasure of his Maker, and so brought sin and misery into the very nature of man, and spread or conveyed this sin or misery through all his offspring.

* By "sin or guilt imputed," I do not mean that any thing, or action, really faulty, is charged by way of accusation on the persons of infants, as though they hereby became personally faulty or blameable, or that the very acts of sin are transferred so as to make them proper sinners or criminals; but I mean that the children of some first man may be, by a righteous covenant, so far esteemed one with their parent when he sinned, as to be in some sense involved with him in his state of condemnation, and liable to the miseries that proceed from it. This I have made to appear at large in the plainest light, in a short *Appendix or Dissertation on Imputed Sin and Righteousness;* and I desire all my expressions in this book may be construed in a consistency with this remark, and with that Dissertation at the end of the book.

The arguments therefore which are brought against this doctrine, from the impossibility or the injustice of imputing the very actions of one man to another, have no force, since I have so often declared in that Essay, that actions are not properly transferred by imputation, but the legal result of those actions.

† If it could be well made out, that the whole race of mankind are partakers of sinful inclinations and evil passions and biasses to vice, and also are exposed to many sharp actual sufferings, and to death, merely and only by the original divine law of their propagation from their parents who had sinned; and if the justice and goodness of God could be vindicated in making and maintaining such a dreadful law or order of propagation through six thousand years; we have no need of further inquiries, but might here be at rest. But if such a scheme be so injurious to the goodness and equity of God, as it seems to be, then we are constrained to seek a little further for a satisfactory account of this universal degeneracy and misery of mankind.

I must confess, I am not fond of such a scheme, or hypothesis, of deriving some sort of guilt from a surety or representative, though I know it has been embraced by a considerable party of christians, ancient and modern. No, I would gladly renounce it, because of some great difficulties attending it, if I could find any other way to relieve the much greater difficulties and harder imputations upon the conduct of divine providence, which will attend this inquiry, if we follow any other track of sentiments. Nor do I see any way how to avoid or escape these perplexities, if we abandon this supposition of a common head or representative of mankind, who may be supposed, according to a just constitution, to involve his posterity together with himself in a state of guilt and misery.

Is it not much easier, to suppose that God looks upon these young creatures, not as innocent or guiltless, but as some way involved or interested in sin or guilt, when in the very original course of nature which he appointed, he brings them into being in such miserable circumstances, and so exposed to sin as well as pain? I say, is it not much easier to suppose, that they are looked on as some way under guilt and condemnation, than that the appointment and providence of a good and holy God should bring them hourly into being, in the midst of such sinful and miserable circumstances, and punish them with such early pains and sorrows, while he looks upon them as perfectly innocent and guiltless?

The fact is evident. The great God, who is both just and good, has appointed, and continues, such a law of propagation, whereby millions of infants, without any personal sin or fault of their own, are brought into being under these wretched circumstances, inclined to sin, and liable to a thousand sorrows and pains, and death. This is plain and certain fact, beyond all reasonable doubt or contest: Now will not the equity or justice, and the goodness of God be much better vindicated by supposing some original and righteous constitution,* whereby these young creatures are some way involved in the guilt or sin of their original parent and representative, and so made liable to misery, than by supposing them to be entirely innocent without any charge of imputed sin, and yet brought into being daily by the God of nature, in a condition of such proneness to sin, and exposed to such miseries?

And as the glorious and holy nature and actions of God are best vindicated by such a supposition, so without it I cannot well explain the Scriptural account of this matter in that one short sentence, Rom. v. 12, *By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned;* that is, sin is imputed, or, which is much one, in St. Paul's language, *death*, the penalty of sin, *has passed on all*, or has reigned over all, and therefore all are esteemed, in some sort, as guilty and condemned in the sight of God, though *they did not sin after the similitude of Adam's transgression;* that is, they did not commit actual personal sin against a known law, as Adam did.† But I give but a single hint in this place, because I have reserved the scriptural account for another part of the discourse.

* The righteousness of this constitution appears plain in Propositions V. and VI. under Question III. and Section 2, in Question IV.

† I confess that it is from Scripture I derive my sentiments on this subject, and I firmly believe this doctrine of the imputation of sin from Adam to all his offspring, according to the sense in which it is explained in the Second Essay at the end of this subject; yet I have endeavoured to shew here, that a careful observation of the world, and

QUESTION III.

HOW COULD A HOLY, A WISE, AND A RIGHTEOUS GOD, WHO IS ALSO A BEING OF INFINITE GOODNESS, ESTABLISH SUCH A CONSTITUTION, THAT ALL MANKIND SHOULD DERIVE THEIR BEING FROM SUCH A NATURAL PARENT AND LEGAL REPRESENTATIVE, WHEREBY SUCH UNIVERSAL SINFULNESS AND MISERY SHOULD, IN THE EVENT, BE SPREAD THROUGH ALL HUMAN NATURE IN ALL FOLLOWING AGES?

ANSWER. If this constitution was not only in itself a wise and a righteous thing in the universal Creator and Governor of the world, but if it was also the effect of goodness in God, as an universal Father of his intelligent creatures; then surely we shall silence all our censures of it at once. If it was a more probable way, so far as we can see, to secure the continuance of man and his whole race in the image and favour of his Maker, though it happened to have a contrary event by the negligence and faulty conduct of the first man, yet, I say, it was a more proper and probable means to secure man in his happiness; then all must confess that this original constitution doth not impeach the holiness, justice, or goodness of God. Now let us enter into particulars, and inquire whether this constitution be not only just and holy, but also good and kind, and most proper and likely to secure innocent man? Perhaps this will appear in the following propositions:

Proposition I. God created man an intelligent and holy creature, but capable of mistake and sin; a compound being, made up of flesh and spirit, or an animal and a mind, with power also to propagate his kind in long successive generations. Now that this could not be unjust, will appear by particulars.

1. There is no injustice in God in creating such a being as man, a creature capable of mistaking and capable of sinning. What if man was formed with intellectual powers inferior to those of an angel; let him remember that even an angel is capable of mistake and sin also: Nor has man any reason to complain that he was not made an angel; for by the same reason an angel might complain that he was not an archangel: And this sort of unreasonable complaint might upon the same foot have run through all lower orders of being, and would have laid a restraint upon God the Creator, from making any lower ranks of intelligent creatures whatsoever. According to this way of arguing, God would never have manifested the rich variety of his wisdom in the various ranks and degrees of creatures; for no rank of beings but the uppermost could ever have been formed. Nay, it may be doubted, according to this way of arguing, whether any creature at all could be formed: For perhaps the highest creature, considered merely in his own natural powers, might be capable of mistake and defect in duty.

But if it be not an unfit or improper thing for an almighty God to make any creature, it is not unfit for him to make a fallible creature, and capable of some defect, though

the exercise of our reasoning powers, with a very little help from revelation, will lead us into these sentiments, and discover to us the justice of them.

In short, as I have said before, these events must arise from such a constitution, or covenant, formed and executed by God as the righteous and supreme Governor of the world, or from the sovereign and arbitrary appointment of God as a Creator and absolute Lord; and I think the execution of this sovereignty brings a harder impeachment of God's conduct than this act of government.

he was originally perfect. And since he is a God of infinite wisdom, he thought it very becoming his character to manifest this infinitely various wisdom in the formation of a vast variety of ranks of beings, some of which should have higher and nobler intellectual powers, and should be further out of the reach of temptation and mistake, and others of them of lower, or meaner intellectual powers, and more within the danger of mistake and temptation. Now this carries no injustice with it, provided that every rank of beings has a sufficient power to guard against its dangers of mistaking, and against the assaults of the temptations to which it might be exposed.

2. Nor was it unjust in God to unite an animal body to this rational mind; for by this union there is a rich variety of new powers arising in that creature, such as sense, appetite, passion, together with all the sensible qualities of colours, sounds, tastes, smells, &c. and the government of animal engines by a mind, all which manifest the various and astonishing riches of divine wisdom in the contriving of such a wondrous creature as man. And if it should be objected,

Objection. That the mind, or spirit, is exposed to some temptations by reason of this union with animal nature, let it be remembered, that the innocent spirit, or rational principle, was formed in a state of power and dominion over all the appetites and passions that arise from flesh and blood; and had abundant capacity to resist all these temptations, while reason maintained its superior post in which it was created, and it did govern sense, appetite, and passion.

And, besides, if there are some supposed inconveniencies attending a spirit united to an animal body, so there are many certain advantages arising from it in the innocent state. The spirit is hereby made capable of tasting all the pleasures of sense, and of the more boundless power of imagination, and making use of the additional powers or organs of the animal, *viz.* eyes, ears, tongue, hands, &c. and all the vigorous efforts of the better passions, for the discharge of its duty, for the honour of its God, for the benefit of its fellow-creatures, and for the happiness of itself.

3. There could be no injustice in appointing such a creature to propagate its own kind by marriage, and to furnish it with all proper powers for that purpose: For if man continued in innocence, he would then enjoy all the innocent pleasures of numerous society, and some of those too springing from himself in every age, together with all the tender and endeared sentiments and delights of sons and daughters, and, as Milton expresses it,

> Relations dear, and all the charities
> Of father, son, and brother.

which would greatly add to the happiness of his earthly state.

Proposition II. Though man was created with powers inferior to some other intellectual beings, yet he was formed "in the image of his Maker," and in his Maker's favour; in a state of perfect innocence, holiness, and peace, with sufficient knowledge to defend and secure him from fatal mistakes, and with sufficient power to resist temptation and to maintain himself in this holy and happy state: But at the same time he was furnished with a liberty of will, that is, with a power to choose good or evil, to disobey his Maker, as well as obey him, to use his understanding well in governing his sense, appetite, and passion, or to abuse his understanding, and darken and weaken it by

giving the reins to sensuality and his meaner powers; he had a liberty, or free-will, to watch against temptation, or to be negligent; to resist it, or to comply with it; to abide in the favour and image of his Maker, or to fall from his Maker's image and favour, according as he should use his liberty well or ill.

Now here is no injustice, nor any want of goodness in making man a free creature: For it is by this freedom that he becomes capable of moral government: It is this that renders him a proper subject of rewards, if he maintains his virtue and obeys his Maker; and it gives him a power of advancing himself by his obedience in his Maker's love: And it is this liberty also that renders him a proper subject of punishment if he neglect his watch, and turn aside to the paths of vice and disobedience.

Proposition III. Innocent man had probably some privileges given him by divine favour, above what were necessary and due to the mere state of his creation, *viz.* he might be indulged to converse with his Maker, perhaps in a visible manner, and to receive special and peculiar communications from him: He might be situated in a place of very great pleasure, with all varieties of tasteful food, and other instruments and objects for his refreshment and delight, and with encouragements to hope, and assurances to expect, that if he continued always humbly dependent upon God, and ever watchful against temptation, and attentive to his duty, he should have strong divine aids in case of danger, upon his application to his Maker for them. This is a very reasonable supposition, derived from the weakness of man, the fallibility of his nature, and from the abounding goodness of his Maker.

Proposition IV. Man was not only by the constitution of his nature put under a law of obedience to God his Maker, in whatsoever he should require of him, but also he might have that law set before him in some more express manner, together with the penalty or threatening annexed to it, *viz.* "If thou obeyest not thy God in the duty which reason requires, thou shalt surely lose thy present privileges, and life itself." Now this ought to have been a constant and powerful guard to him against all temptations, if he had the command and the threatening so expressly set before him.

Proposition V. There is also abundant reason to believe, that he had not only a law given him, with a penalty threatened for the breach of it, but also a covenant made with him, and a promise given to him, not only of continuing in his present happiness, but of being immutably confirmed and established in immortality; and, perhaps, of enjoying some greater happiness if he continued to obey God and abstain from sin.

This covenant, indeed, seems to be a matter of pure divine favour, above and beyond what was due to him as a creature: For after he had fulfilled his obedience to the law for many years, and continued in the possession of his present comforts, God, considered as an absolute sovereign, might have annihilated him, and have done him no wrong, so far as I can judge. The great God is absolute Lord of all, and if we consider only his sovereignty and his justice, he might, I think, have taken away from a creature what he had given him, without any injustice at all? So that this covenant of life, or promise of immortality, and especially of superior happiness as a reward of his obedience, was the mere effect of divine goodness.

And yet we cannot but suppose there was such a covenant made with innocent man, and such a promise of life, and even of superior happiness, given him upon condition of obedience during his state of trial, if we consider the following things:

1. I might in the first place argue thus: The great goodness of God, so far as it has been manifested in his conduct towards his creatures, seems to plead for it, that man should have some reward of his obedience, some additional gratifications and blessings above the mere continuance of his present life and peace: For it hath not been the way of God, in any of his dispensations with the children of men, so far as we can learn from observation or Scripture, to set his creatures at work for nothing; 1 *Cor.* ix. 9, 10, God will have the ox rewarded that treads out the corn, by forbidding to muzzle him, and permitting him to eat; and so he will have his ministers rewarded with a maintenance. *Ezek.* xxix. 19, 20, God bestows all the riches and the spoil of Egypt to reward Nebuchadnezzar and his army for the service which they had served against Tyrus, for *they wrought for me, saith the Lord.* It is described as the known character of God, and what every man is called to believe, *that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him;* Heb. xi. 6. And it has been his constant course of transaction with his creatures, to encourage them to duty by the promise of some reward above their present state and circumstances: And if it is thus in our fallen state, why should it not be much rather in the state of innocence?

2. I argue thus: God made the soul of man in its own nature immortal: Now if man had continued innocent, and honoured the law of God with obedience during all his state of trial, man would have acquired some advances in the knowledge of God, some improvement of his nature, and greater resemblance to God, by a more intimate acquaintance and converse with God in his various perfections and works, and some stronger bias to the love of God and to all holiness, which in itself would have been a natural increase of his happiness. Nor is it to be supposed, that the blessed God would have presently contradicted the nature of things, and that connection of causes and effects which his own wisdom had just established, that is, the connection of holiness and happiness. Nor can we imagine that he would have forbid the soul of man to be immortal, contrary to its very nature, in order to have put an end to the life and happiness of so holy and so obedient a creature: God always loves holiness so much, that he will reward it where he finds it. And if man, with this improvement of his nature, had continued immortal, his happiness had been still greater, and that without end.

3. God hath wrought into the nature of man an earnest desire after life or immortality, and also a desire of a perpetual change or novelty of pleasures, and that without the diminution of them. The nature of man would be tired with one everlasting round of the mere repetition of sensible delights, of eating, drinking, sleeping, working, &c. or even of the more refined delights of the mind, if there were no novelty, no fresh scenes of pleasure to open upon him; and yet man could never desire new pleasures should be less than those he enjoyed before. Now since God hath wrought this appetite or desire of immortality, and of fresh delights, into the very nature of man, it is highly probable that God, who makes nothing in vain, would have raised or translated him to some scenes of higher felicity, and thus gratified this desire which himself had wrought in his innocent creature, after man had paid him so much actual honour and obedience in his state of trial.

4. I might borrow another argument from Scripture and the tree of life, which, in the New Testament, is made a figure of the advanced happiness of heaven, and the joys which the saints shall possess there. Now though it be not expressly revealed at large

in so short a history as the third of Genesis, that a blessed immortality should be the reward of Adam's obedience, yet there is much reason to suppose that *the tree of life* could not properly have been any emblem or figure of eternal life, under the covenant of grace, if it had not been an emblem, sign, seal, or pledge of this covenant of works, and of this promise, which should have made Adam immortal, and unchangeably happy; and that, probably, in the same way as the *tree of knowledge of good and evil* was made a sign and pledge of the evil that should come upon him, if he disobeyed his Maker.

Upon the whole, therefore, it is highly rational to conclude, that if man had continued innocent, his pleasures would have been increased, and his life immortal.

Proposition VI. This covenant is justly supposed to reach to his posterity, and include his offspring, as well as himself, in this manner, *viz.* If man had continued in his state of obedience, and thereby confirmed and advanced himself in the image and favour of his Maker, and secured immortal life to himself, by his obedience during the appointed time of his trial, he should also propagate his offspring perhaps in that established or advanced degree of the divine image and favour, or, at least, in the security of immortal life and happiness to them: But if man should bring a sinful taint, and vicious disorder upon his nature, and diseases and death upon his animal body, by tasting some forbidden pleasure, and sinning against God, that he should not only lose this image and favour of God himself, with all his privileges, but that he should beget his offspring in his own sinful likeness, and in his own unhappy circumstances, despoiled of the image and favour of God, and of the privileges which their father enjoyed during his innocency.

Now there is no injustice in this appointment: Because life as well as death was contained in the covenant; and the advantages which were to be enjoyed by the obedience of the first man, and his posterity, were as great, or greater, than the disadvantages which would attend his disobedience.

And as there was no injustice in it, so it may be proved, that it was an instance of divine goodness to mankind: For when one man was set up as a common head of multitudes, he must be supposed to have so much the stronger obligations upon his mind to obedience, in order to preserve and secure the happiness of those multitudes which should spring from him, as well as his own, and which would be involved in his misery, in case he disobeyed. No single person standing the test of obedience to obtain his own single happiness, can be supposed to have an equal motive to diligence, and watchfulness, and duty, with that man who was entrusted both with his own welfare, and with the welfare of millions.

And besides, it was a further instance of divine goodness, as well as wisdom, to entrust that very man with the fate of mankind, who was to be the father and fountain of all their race: For all the kind endearing thoughts that arise from the relation of a father, must add abundant weight to the obligations and the solicitudes which lay upon him to continue in his state of innocence and obedience. If he had merely been appointed to be the representative of millions who were no way akin to him, it must have lain with much concern upon the heart of a good and innocent man, as the first man was, to oblige him to watchfulness in his duty; but when every one of these millions is his own offspring, the obligation is enhanced by all the tenderness of a father, and all

the solicitude that an innocent and benevolent father must be supposed to have for the welfare of those who should spring from him.

And it is possible, also, that all this might be set before the first man in a very strong light by God, his Creator; he might be informed that he should have a large posterity, and that they should all stand and be happy, or fall and be miserable, together with himself.

Proposition VII. Man being furnished with all these principles and powers, to enable him to stand his ground against temptation, with all these strong and tender obligations to secure his own happiness, and the happiness of his offspring, was put into a state of trial, that he might acquire the rewards promised to obedience, and do honour to the governing justice and authority of God, while he was procuring happiness to himself and his offspring.

Proposition VIII. Unhappy man, though placed in these advantageous circumstances, yet gave way to the allurements of sense, or appetite, or passion; by neglecting his watch, he grew inattentive to the command, the promise, and the threatened penalty; he hearkened, perhaps, to the temptations of some evil spirit, he rashly determined on the side of sense and appetite, he ventured to break his Maker's law, lost his innocence and happiness, his Maker's image and his favour!

It is no wonder that he lost his Maker's favour, for that depended upon the condition of obeying his Maker's command: When man had failed of his duty in the day of trial, God, the Governor and the Judge, does not and will not treat him with the favour which he shewed him in the days of his innocence and obedience. And we may reasonably suppose, that God, who made himself and his goodness known to his innocent creature, and conversed with him in a friendly manner, forsook his disobedient creature and departed from him, and gave him none of those kind visits or comforts, which perhaps he might enjoy before, nor had he sufficient encouragement to expect divine assistances in case of any future dangers or temptations.*

Nor is it strange, that man should lose his Maker's image by indulging one sin; for his nature itself became vitiated by this one sinful action, which may be accounted for several ways:

1. By acting contrary to the principle or habit of holiness, which was in his soul, he violated and weakened this habit or principle of holiness: It was a bold venture for him to allow so much as a debate within himself, whether he should disobey his Maker or no:

* *Objection.* But, whatever suppositions may be made by our fancy, or reasoning, yet this could not be the real condition of man after his sin, to be thus forsaken of God, &c. because God, as a tender father of our first parents, was careful to guard and cherish their bodies, by clothing them, and he gave them a promise of mercy and a Saviour immediately; *Gen.* iii. 15; and the special aids of his grace, on many occasions were vouchsafed to men. He revealed a gospel to them, or a way of salvation, and has been ever since multiplying instances of goodness and grace towards them: This appears throughout the whole Bible, so that our only holding up the Bible refutes this opinion.

Answer. The great God, considered as a righteous Governor of the world, and upon the foot of his broken law, which pronounces *tribulation and wrath against every soul that doth amiss,* may be well said to forsake his disobedient creature, and that without encouragement to expect divine assistances, &c. These are the representations of the Bible concerning God's dealing with sinful men, *as lying under the guilt of the broken law;* Rom. iii. 19. Eph. ii. 3. And in this view even the elect themselves are called *children of wrath, by nature, even as others;* notwithstanding that God had provided a covenant of grace, whereby multitudes of fallen mankind should be recovered and saved: And he manifested it to our first parents and their descendants, in various degrees, and on several occasions, even soon after the fall.

All this provision, therefore, for the good of man in this life, or for the salvation of him hereafter, does not hinder the Scripture from representing men in their fallen estate, under the broken law of works, as miserable and destitute of God's favour, and without hope.

But by actually cheating or contradicting his conscience, and by sinning against the light of his innocent state, and his own mind, and reason, he broke the inward spring of conscience and virtue, if I may so express it, which gave him before a constant bent and propensity to holiness and obedience: As we find at this day, when persons of a religious education once violate the restraints of their own mind, and break the bars of conscience, they render its force much weaker for time to come, and go on to act contrary to it with still greater ease and freedom.

2. When man had once sinned against his Maker, his heart must necessarily misgive him, and his guilty fears continually arise: His reason and conscience must tell him that he was an offender, a rebel-creature, and that his Maker had a right to resent his crime; and how terrible that resentment might be, he knew not. Thence forward he looked upon God with an eye of fear and dread, rather than with an eye of love: He might probably despair of mercy when he came soberly to bethink himself, how great was his crime against a God of such majesty and such goodness, who was the spring of his being and comforts, as well as his righteous Governor and his Judge: And then he could no longer love that God, of whose mercy he despaired. And thus, by losing the sense of the love of God to him, and by impairing or destroying the principle of love to God in his own soul, he lost, impaired, or destroyed the truest and the best principles of all holiness and obedience. He could look upon God no longer as a friend whom he was wont to approach with comfort and delight, but he rather avoided his company, and feared or hated all converse with him, as an almighty enemy; and the further he departed from God, the more did the power of sin increase in him, and the love of God died.

3. By indulgence of some sinful appetite or passion, contrary to the dictates of reason and judgment, he weakened his reasoning powers, and gave such a loose to passion and sense after this victory, that it more easily prevailed over him in all following instances, as is common in his posterity even to this day: Reason, opposed and beclouded by strong passion, loses its clearness of judgment; and when it is abused and disobeyed, and counteracted by sensual powers, it grows weaker in all its exercises about truth and duty, and its natural and original influence to govern our actions is greatly diminished, The more frequently we indulge an act of sin, the more are we blinded in our true judgment, concerning the rule of duty and our violation of it, and the more sensible power does sin gain over us: Then every new temptation works with greater efficacy, and repeats its assaults with more success: And these victories of sin over the fallen creature, must still be more easy and frequent, when he hath lost all just grounds to expect any manner of divine aids or influences.

Thus it is easy to conceive, how man, by committing one sin against his conscience, and by cheating or violating his own reason, by indulging his appetites or passions to prevail over his understanding, and losing his sense of his Maker's favour, was quickly deprived both of his holiness and his peace, his virtue, and his happiness. His judgment and reason, being weakened by his abuse of them, are more easily imposed upon for ever after, and more liable to be deceived in matters of sin and duty, and the restraints of reason and conscience being enfeebled, temptation prevails upon him continually.

Proposition IX. Then sinful and miserable man, going on to propagate his kind, according to the law of creation, in his own image, and according to the constitution

and covenant between God and man, produced all his race in the same degenerate, sinful, and miserable state, and circumstances, whereinto he had plunged himself.

Thus mankind are born with evil inclinations, and in the ruin and dishonour of their nature without the divine favour, and without the divine image, cast out of his covenant of love, thoughtless of God, or averse to him, vain and sensual in their desires, exposed to temptations from within and from without, and without any claim or just pretence to divine aid or protection. They are led away by the principles of flesh and sense from early years, in opposition to the principles of reason, and to the law of holiness: Their judgment is blinded and biassed on the side of appetite and passion, they are often deceived, and they take delight in their delusions: Truth and duty become less natural to them, and less inviting: They wander in quest of happiness among sensible things, and immerse themselves in vice and folly; they grow up in sin, they rebel against their Maker, they throw themselves still more and further out of the favour of God, by fresh disobedience; and thence arise the iniquities and the miseries of the inhabitants of this world, even from their youngest years, to death and the grave.

Proposition X. To make it yet further appear, that mankind from their infancy and early years are under tokens of the displeasure of God on the account of sin, let it be considered here, that the first man who sinned might be justly deprived of some of his former blessings by God himself, as a direct punishment of his own sin, as well as by natural consequence he lost others of them: This is evident from what is said before. Now, except the mere consciousness of sin, the shame and pain of self-reflection, or anguish of conscience, which is the natural effect of personal guilt, and belongs only to the personal transgressor, what is there of all the blessings which the first man is supposed to lose either by natural consequence, or to be deprived of as forfeited to his Maker's justice, which his children do not also lose? They seem plainly to be deprived of them by reason of this sin of their parent, because they are blessings which they would have been possessed of, if their parent had stood innocent.

Let us inquire into particulars: Are they weakened in their understanding as well as he? Hath not their appetite and passion too often a superior and prevailing power over their reason as well as his? Are not their thoughts and inclinations early immoral, carnal, and sensual, and averse from God and things spiritual? Are not their wills perverse and corrupt? Are not the evil principles of pride, malice, revenge, envy, working in them by nature? Are they not subject to powerful temptations on all sides, which are generally too strong for them? Are they not liable to diseases, to injuries from other creatures, to wounds, pains, and poverty, to hunger, thirst, and nakedness, to miseries of every kind, and to death itself, as well as their first parent? If therefore all the natural evils, which fall upon, or are inflicted on the first sinner, on account of his moral evil, fall also on his posterity, always excepting anguish of conscience and self-reflection, is it not evident that they are joined with him in his fall, and that they are fallen from their Maker's image and favour together with him? For we can never suppose that they all would have been naturally, or from their nativity, so vicious, and subject to so many miseries and so destitute of blessings, had they been propagated by a parent who had continued in the perfect favour and image of his Maker.

Proposition XI. Nor is it strange to suppose, nor is it hard to conceive, that this universal taint or infection, this general degeneracy and desolation of human nature, both with regard to sin and misery, should be conveyed according to an original, wise, and

holy constitution of God, by the means of natural generation from one man to all his posterity; for we see the very same thing actually done continually, in God's wise and holy providence. Do we not find the same sort of vice and iniquity, of disease and death, transmitted from parents to children, and that sometimes for many successive generations? As for instance:

Instance I. In sins. How often do we find a proud, a passionate, a false, a malicious temper, a lewd or a sottish inclination, transmitted from parents to children; so that the features of their faces are scarcely so much copied out in the offspring, as the vices of their nature! And in some houses, from age to age, there is a race of drunkards or adulterers, of cheats or thieves, of cruel, proud, and malicious wretches, continued in the world.

Instance II. In miseries. How common a thing is it also to have the gout, the scurvy, the stone conveyed down from one generation to another! How does the king's-evil descend to distant posterity! How often does frenzy or madness run in the blood, and taint whole families! How frequently do the diseases of an infamous name, derived from the lewdness of predecessors, make the lives of their offspring short and miserable! And how many instances are there of a great part of a household that from one generation to another die of the small-pox, or a consumption of the lungs, in their youth, or in the midst of their days!

Now these are evident and unquestionable matters of fact with regard to particular sins and miseries, diseases and death; these things are certain beyond all contest: And why may we not easily suppose the same matter of fact to be true with regard to the general depravation, misery, and mortality of human nature? Though the evidences of this general contagion may not appear quite so plain and so obvious, and within the grasp of our survey, yet perhaps reason may have as forcible arguments for it, and by this parallel instance may more easily solve the conduct of providence in this universal depravation of nature.

And, indeed, I think such parallel instances never would have been found among mankind, were it not for the first and general condemnation which came on all men by the sin of some first parent, and the general depravation of all in that one head of our race; on which the next question proceeds.

QUESTION IV.

BUT HAS IT NOT AN APPEARANCE OF INJUSTICE IN THE CREATOR AND GOVERNOR OF THE WORLD, TO MAKE SO MANY MILLIONS SUFFER FOR THE SIN OF ONE?

Answer. This appearance of injustice is in some measure relieved, if you consider this one man to be the natural head and fountain of all the rest; even as a sickly and weakly animal among the brute creatures propagates a race of feeble and sickly animals, according to the common law of creation and propagation, *viz.* that every creature should produce its own likeness in nature and quality: And the offspring are exposed to the miserable consequences of those diseases, or sickly qualities which the parent animal communicates to them together with their natures.

And if it should be thought hard, or unjust, that a race of intelligent beings should be naturally subject to these laws of animal propagation, together with all the sinful and

miserable consequences of it, yet the supposition of the first man being set up as a representative, a surety, or federal head of his posterity, as well as he was their natural father, will do much toward the removal of all remaining appearances of injustice in this part of the providence and government of God.

And indeed, I must confess, it is my present opinion, that the mere doctrine of the animal propagation of man, according to the natural law of creation, is not a sufficient relief to this difficulty, without supposing the first father of mankind to be a common federal head and representative of his posterity, as well as the natural spring and fountain of them. And the reason is this:

Reason. Because, if this scene of misery arise merely from the first parent being the natural spring of his race, it seems to impeach the goodness and equity of God, who has constituted this nature by a mere arbitrary act of his will: But if it arise from this federal headship, then it is owing to man's sin, and God's rectoral justice and wisdom, punishing that sin according to this covenant.* But these two suppositions put together, I think, do best absolve and clear the conduct of providence, and the divine government, from all imputations of injustice; especially if we consider and remember the following things:

1. Happiness might have been secured to all mankind by this constitution, as well as forfeited and lost. If there was on one side so great a risk as the innocence, welfare, and happiness of mankind entrusted with one person, so that sin and misery would be brought upon millions if he sinned and lost the image of God and his favour, there was as great an advantage allowed on the other side to all mankind, even the everlasting security of their innocence, welfare, and happiness, if this one person continued in his obedience, and preserved himself in the image and favour of his Maker: And there appears, so far as we can judge, to be so much equity in this constitution, that if we had no intimation of this account of things from Scripture, yet the reason of the thing inclines us to believe, that this might probably be the original appointment of God, the righteous Governor of the world.

To enforce this sentiment, let us consider, that if the first man, who stood the surety of his posterity, had fulfilled the obedience required during all his time of trial, it would have appeared as a hardship upon all his posterity to have had each of them a single state of dangerous trial† imposed upon them too, which might have exposed them to temptation, guilt, and misery: For since it is plain, upon such a constitution, that they were to be involved in the guilt and misery of the first man, if he did not go through his trial

* If it should be objected, that this federal headship is an act of God's arbitrary will, as well as the natural headship, and so both cases are alike; I answer, that the federal headship is a most eligible thing to all their posterity, if all had been present to give their consent to it; and for that reason I call it federal: But a mere arbitrary act of the God of nature seems to carry a harder imputation on God.

† Doth that man write the sincere sense of his own mind and conscience, who charges these expressions about "a dangerous trial for Adam's posterity, if Adam had stood," with this supposition or inference, that "we are none of us upon a state of trial now, and that Adam alone was upon trial for us all?" And yet to shew that he means this unjust censure, he spends almost two pages to prove, that we are in a state of trial now, because "there is a day of judgment coming, when every single person shall be rewarded according to his works."

But let such a man know, that we have ever owned and granted, that we are in a state of personal trial at present, and that the day of judgment is designed to decide that important event. But let it be remembered also, that this is upon the foot of a new covenant, proposed to the world since the fall of Adam, not that old covenant whereby Adam was tried, and having broken it by sin, was condemned and forfeited his immortality, and his other blessings, both for himself and his posterity.

well, and maintain his innocence and obedience; it seems reasonable also, that if he did finish his state of trial well, the advantage of it should have redounded to all those who stood represented in and by him, and confirmed their happiness.

You will say, what then would have become of all the millions of mankind in succeeding generations? I answer,

Answer. They might have been seized, as Enoch was, and translated to the upper world, after some appointed time of obedience here on earth. You will query then,

Query. "Would not this time of obedience have been a season of trial to them?" I answer,

Answer. Not a state of dangerous trial, whether they should be happy or miserable; but a season of proper trial, and exercise of obedience to prepare them for different degrees of advancement in heavenly places, according to their fidelity and diligence.

And, by the way, let it be observed, that if the first man had maintained his innocence, and his posterity been established therein, no man would have complained of it, but with thankfulness all would have accepted it as a divine favour and a happy covenant.

2. Remember what was before hinted, that this was the most probable, and the safest way, to secure happiness to mankind by one man's having this vast and important trust committed to him, *viz.* The innocence and happiness of all his posterity; for he was thereby laid under much stronger obligations to watch and guard against every temptation, and to use more vigorous endeavours to maintain his Maker's image and favour, than any single person could be, who had only his own happiness to take care of. By this means, all the springs of benevolence and compassion to fellow-creatures, and all the tenderness of paternal love and pity to a numerous offspring, both which principles, doubtless, were very strong in innocent man, were awakened, and set at work to guard against sin, as well as the powers and motives of self-love, and all the principles of self-preservation: So that this constitution of God had not only justice and equity in it, but goodness and kindness.

3. Let it be considered also, that this is a common thing among men, for one person to be a natural representative, and, as it is were, to become a trustee or a surety for his posterity thereby; by which means they enjoy or sustain the honours or the dishonours, the riches or the poverty, which the merit or crime of their forefather hath procured. If a subject receive from his prince the honour of nobility, and be made an earl, upon account of his merit, together with the royal endowment of a large estate to support the honour, this estate; and this honour will descend together to the latest posterity, and the eldest male of his family, in all ages, is an earl, and enjoys the estate which is annexed to the title. But, on the other hand, if a nobleman rebel against his king, and is attainted of high treason, or proved guilty and condemned, he loses his estate and his honour together; he loses the favour of his prince at court, and that nobility, which is the image of his prince; and together with him all his posterity are cut off from their pretensions to the honour and the estate: Nor is this ever counted unrighteous dealing among the governors of the world; why then should it be imputed as unrighteous to the great God, who is the supreme Governor of all worlds?

4. I might add also, in the last place, that even where a person is not the natural

head, or fountain of life to others, yet he may be made their common legal, or federal head, their representative or surety to act for them, so that they shall enjoy the benefits of his loyalty and prudence, if he behave and act well, or shall suffer many miseries if he be guilty of rebellion or folly. Is not a member of parliament made the representative of the whole county or town, and entrusted with the liberties of those whom he represents? If he assists in making good laws, the town or county enjoys the benefit of them; but if he join with others to give up his own and their liberties, to the hand of a tyrant, they also become slaves together with himself. So a plenipotentiary is sent from a republic, suppose from Holland or Venice, to transact affairs of war or peace, and the whole community, which made him their representative, either obtain great advantages, or are exposed to many miseries, according as this plenipotentiary manages his own and their affairs with prudence and faithfulness, or suffers himself to be governed by rash and foolish principles, by negligence or falsehood. Now if any person, who is not naturally the head and fountain of others, may be made their federal head, or representative, much more may a natural head be appointed to represent them.

And if these things are so far from being charged with injustice in the common affairs of men, that they seem as it were necessary, in some cases, from the nature of things, why should it be reckoned unjust with God to deal with man in the same manner? And why may not all mankind with the same reason be said to fall into condemnation and ruin in their natural and federal head, and yet the great God be just and righteous?*

QUESTION V.

THOUGH THE JUSTICE OF THESE TRANSACTIONS MAY BE GRANTED IN SOME MEASURE, WHERE THE REPRESENTATIVE IS CHOSEN BY THE ACTUAL AND FREE CONSENT OF ALL THOSE WHOM HE REPRESENTS, YET SINCE THIS WAS NOT THE CASE BETWEEN THE FIRST MAN AND ALL HIS POSTERITY, SINCE THEY NEVER CONSENTED THAT HE SHOULD ACT FOR THEM, NOR ENTRUSTED HIM TO PASS THE TRIAL IN THEIR STEAD, THEREFORE WHY SHOULD THEY FALL UNDER THE PENALTY AND MISERY DUE TO HIS FOLLY AND GUILT?

To which I answer these several ways:

1. In one of the cases amongst men which was described before, *viz.* Where a nobleman by his treason exposes his latest posterity to disgrace and poverty, he was not chosen the representative of his offspring, and yet the disadvantages that come upon them through his treason are not reckoned unjustly inflicted, though the crime was committed some years or ages before they were born: And indeed, as I have intimated before, how can any person be supposed to be a more proper surety and representative of a large multitude, than the common father of them all, who has the obligation of paternal love to take care of his offspring, and who may justly be supposed to be most worthy of that post of trust and honour.

2. There are a great many instances in Scripture, in the common transactions of providence, and the government of God among men, where the children have been so far esteemed as parts of their parents, or as one with them, that they have been rewarded

* See an objection answered at the end of the Eighth Question.

with considerable blessings, and that through several generations, upon the account of their fathers' piety or virtue; and they have been also deprived of very great privileges, afflicted with sore diseases and calamities, and even punished with death itself, on the account of some criminal head of their family. So much has it been the way of God's dealing with men in many cases, that there seems to be something of a law of nature in it, that a parent should be a surety for his offspring, especially while children are not capable of acting for themselves.

And doubtless there is a justice in this manner of proceeding, which is well known to God, though not always so visible to us, "for the Judge of all the earth must do what is right;" he cannot, he will not, do any wrong. The seed of Abraham were rewarded for the obedience of their father; *Gen.* xxii. 16—18. The Rechabites, in their successive generations, have a promise of a long entail of blessings, because of the honour and obedience which they paid to their father Jonadab; *Jer.* xxxv. 17—19. The throne of Judah was continued in David's house for many generations, because of David's piety and zeal; 2 *Sam.* vii. 16. *Phineas* had the promise of a long priesthood in his family, because of his zeal for God; *Numb.* xxv. 12.

And as blessings were thus conveyed, so were punishments. The seed of Ham were cursed with slavery, for their father's crime; *Gen.* ix. 25. All the children were swallowed up by an earthquake, for the rebellion of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, their fathers; *Numb.* xvi. 31.* Achan's family were stoned, and perished with him, for his theft and sacrilege; *Josh.* vii. 24. The children of the Canaanites were destroyed, together with their parents, for their abounding iniquities; *Deut.* xx. 16—18. The leprosy was transmitted to the seed of Gehazi, for his sin of covetousness and lying; 2 *Kings* v. 26, 27. Fathers in this case are made as it were the sureties and representatives, or trustees, for their children, though the children do not actually and formally agree to it; yet surely *God is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works;* Psalm cxlv. 17.

And we see these events frequently in providence now-a-days. Some families have as it were a manifest entail of blessings upon them, and some an entail of diseases and miseries, poverty and disgrace, on the account of their parents' conduct. And I think this is not to be attributed merely to their natural descent from such parents, but in the government of God, parents are made and esteemed a sort of trustees for their children in the good or evil things of this life, which renders a succession of blessings or curses in their families more just and equitable.

3. Though all mankind were not actually present, to consent that their father should be their representative, yet the appointment is so just and so equitable in the Governor of the world, and also there is so much goodness in it, considering that they were to have enjoyed immortality and happiness if he had kept his innocence, that none of the race of Adam could reasonably have refused this proposal. For this father of mankind, as I have shewn, is supposed to have as much wisdom and holiness, and love to himself, and resolution to maintain his own innocence and happiness, as any single person among them could have; and he would have the stronger motives of benevolence and fatherly pity to make him watch over his conduct, and to guard him from sin, having the whole

* The Scripture leads us to believe that most of their children perished with them; *Numb.* xvi. 27, though some, or all, of Korah's sons might be absent and escape, *chapter* xxvi. 11, Heb. *benei*, sons.

concern of the happiness or misery of his offspring devolved upon him. The care of thousands, dear to him as his children, and whose peace or pain, whose life or death depend on his conduct, would naturally awaken all his watchfulness beyond the mere care of his single self.

And if we suppose all his posterity to have been endowed with the clear reason and wisdom, the sagacity and solid judgment, of innocent man, and to have had this question proposed to them, "whether they would each act for themselves in a dangerous state of trial, or have their common father appointed as a representative to act for them?" surely they must have chosen their common father to have been their representative: For their reason and wisdom would have assured them that their innocence and happiness were safer in his hands than in their own, inasmuch as the obligations that lay on him to secure it both for himself and for them, were much stronger than could lie on every single person acting only for himself.

CONFIRMATION OF THIS SCHEME.

To conclude: I think we may venture to say, that this universal mortality and death, which even our adversaries allow to be derived from Adam's sin, and all that long train of sorrows and miseries, which are come upon all mankind, young and old, must arise originally from some "federal transaction of the great God, as a Governor, with their first parent, or parents;" and some covenant made with him for their posterity, either expressed or implied, whereby they all justly fall under these evils and disadvantages: Or else it must arise from the sovereign arbitrary will and appointment of God himself, that upon our first parents' sin, all their posterity should become thus mortal and miserable as themselves.

Now those who deny this our scheme, or federal representation of things, are generally very tender and fearful of allowing any such hardships to come upon creatures by the mere arbitrary will and appointment of the Creator, lest they cast a blemish on the divine goodness and equity. And yet I cannot find any possible way to avoid this imputation on the equity and goodness of God, unless the universal misery and death of mankind be derived from some such covenant or federal constitution, whereby they were all, as it were, included in one head, and he as their great moral representative acted for them all, and by his sin involved them all in one ruin: Whereas if this ruin be derived from their first parent, considered merely as their natural head, the charge, or imputation, will fall plainly upon the absolute and arbitrary will and sovereignty of God as Creator, who thus appointed it.

And let it be observed, that this would be such an instance of sovereignty too, which the posterity of this first man could never have wisely chosen nor consented to, as a thing beneficial to them; whereas this cannot be said concerning the original federal constitution of the first man to be the representative of his posterity, which was eligible by the wisest creature, as well as kindly, wisely, and equitably appointed by the Creator.

QUESTION VI.

MAN IS A CREATURE MADE UP OF TWO DISTINCT PARTS, SOUL AND BODY: NOW IF BOTH THESE WERE DERIVED FROM THE PARENTS BY A NATURAL PROPAGATION, THEN ALL MANKIND MAY BE SAID TO DERIVE THEIR VICIOUS APPETITES AND PASSIONS, AND SINFUL INCLINATIONS, FROM THEIR FIRST PARENT, WHICH HAD CORRUPTED AND SPOILED HIS OWN NATURE BY SIN: BUT SINCE IT IS GENERALLY AGREED, THAT THE BODY ONLY IS PROPAGATED FROM THE PARENTS, BUT THE SOUL OF EVERY INFANT IS IMMEDIATELY FORMED BY GOD HIMSELF, AND UNITED TO THE INFANT-BODY, HOW IS IT POSSIBLE THAT THE SOUL SHOULD BE DEFILED WITH SINFUL PRINCIPLES, AND PARTAKE OF VICIOUS INCLINATIONS, WHEN IT IS ONLY THE BODY THAT PROPERLY COMES INTO THE WORLD BY GENERATION?*

ANSWER I. As the soul of the first man, by sinning against God, injured and violated the habits or principles of virtue and holiness that were in his nature, by boldly venturing to act contrary to them; so the vicious motions, or irregular appetites of the flesh, grew stronger in him daily, and prevailed more and more against his reason and his better powers; and these sinful ferments of animal nature, these irregular passions and appetites to unlawful objects, or excessive appetites, or inclinations to things that were lawful, grew so strong in this first man, that the soul frequently complied with them, and committed new sins against the laws of his Maker.

Answer II. These sinful ferments of the flesh, these irregular appetites, these motions of corrupt passion, so far as they are seated in the flesh and blood, are conveyed down from the original sinner, in greater or less degrees,† to all his offspring, in continual succession; and the soul, in its infant-state, is perpetually impressed and allured by these vicious motions, appetites, and passions of the flesh; and it as readily complies with those that are accounted criminal, as with those that are innocent.

It is true, indeed, that in the mere infant-state, the soul has no knowledge of God, or

* Let it be observed here, that not the calvinists only, who suppose the first man to be the legal representative of his posterity, are obliged to answer this question, and to solve this difficulty; but almost every sect and party of Christians, who allow any thing of original sin or degeneracy, are under equal obligations to remove it.

† Though original sin, so far as it is imputed, is equal in all the race of Adam, for it is the imputation of Adam's sin, or condemnation by it to suffer sorrow and death; yet original sin inherent, or the corruption of nature, which is propagated from the first man to all his offspring, has various degrees in different persons. The very animal juices and ferments, in the formation of particular human bodies, may have more or less of the vicious tincture in them. And this may be partly owing to the virtues or vices of immediate parents, or other ancestors, or the particular tempers, humours, and constitutions of the father or mother. Hence we say of some persons, they have more natural virtues than others; that is, good temper, compassion, moderation, temperance, &c. And others have more natural vices, such as cruelty, envy, pride, drunkenness, wantonness, &c.

The reason of this seems to be founded in the present nature of things, though we may not always descry the immediate and particular causes. But the general cause and ground of the propagation of particular vices to children, must be referred originally to their common interest in the guilt or condemnation of Adam's first sin. Without this I cannot vindicate the providence of God in the propagation of any particular vices by the appointed laws of nature.

And if it be inquired, why some have more native vices than others, since the ground or demerit of all is one and the same? I answer,

Answer. That it is owing to the mere mercy of God, that every child has not as vile, and corrupt, and vicious a nature or temper, as the worst; and if every one were equally vicious in their animal temper, the government of God would be justified in the permission of it.

his law, of virtue or vice, of its own duty or sin; and therefore, in its mere infant-state, the actions are not properly human or moral; nor can they be actually criminal in the sight of God, so as to contract actual guilt, till years of knowledge and understanding, and till the mind and will are capable of knowing, choosing, and refusing moral good and evil; and at what time this is to be determined, the great God only knows: But when it is capable of exerting any actions of the will with understanding, and such as are properly human and moral, it contracts actual and personal guilt, by these sinful compliances with the flesh or animal nature. Thus original sin, especially that part of it which consists in the corruption of our nature, is evidently conveyed and communicated by the flesh; and thence it comes to pass, that the principles of sin in mankind, and the evil habits both in the soul and in the body, are so often called *the flesh*, in Scripture, because the flesh is the means of the propagation of sin, and because the vicious motions and ferments which are in the flesh, lead the soul astray to forbidden actions.

It is granted, the soul has reasoning and reflecting powers, and is furnished with judgment and conscience, yet these are very young and feeble in childhood, and the soul seldom calls them into counsel to inquire or advise; for it finds it much easier to comply with every animal appetite and passion. Thus it practises vice, though in less degrees, as it passes from infancy to childhood; thus it grows up to taste, to indulge, and to delight in forbidden enjoyments. Then, as its knowledge increases, it sins against the plainer dictates of conscience, and with a more criminal consent of the will; thus it increases its guilt, and strengthens the habits of sin, both in the body and in the mind, and grows up towards perfection in iniquity, unless restraining or recovering grace prevent.

QUESTION VII.

BUT IF WE ALLOW THAT IT IS POSSIBLE THE NEW-CREATED SOUL SHOULD BE THUS CORRUPTED, YET IS IT AGREEABLE TO THE JUSTICE, OR WISDOM, OR GOODNESS OF GOD, TO CREATE SO MANY MILLIONS OF SOULS, PURE, INNOCENT, AND HOLY, AS THEY MUST BE IN THEIR OWN NATURES, COMING FROM THE HANDS OF GOD, AND TO UNITE THEM IMMEDIATELY TO SUCH BODIES, DERIVED FROM SINFUL PARENTS, AND INFECTED WITH VICIOUS FERMENTS AND APPETITES, WHEREBY THEY ARE SO EARLY, AND ALMOST UNAVOIDABLY, LED INTO SINFUL PRACTICES, AND DEFILED THEREBY?

And, to make this question still more difficult, it might be added,

IS IT NOT CONTRARY TO THE JUSTICE AND GOODNESS OF GOD, TO CREATE INNOCENT SOULS, AND UNITE THEM TO SUCH BODIES, DERIVED FROM SINFUL PARENTS, WHEREBY THEY ARE SUBJECT TO MANY PAINFUL SENSATIONS, SUCH ANGUISH AND AGONIES, AND EARLY MISERY, BEFORE THEY CAN KNOW ANY THING OF GOOD OR EVIL, OR HAVE COMMITTED ANY ACTUAL TRANSGRESSION?

ANSWER.—Perhaps this is the greatest difficulty in the whole doctrine of original

sin,* and therefore I shall offer at a humble endeavour to answer it in a more particular and distinct manner, by the following steps or degrees of reasoning:

Reason I. Though the soul of man be created by God himself, without depraved or sinful qualities in it, yet it never exists or comes into being, but as a part of human nature; and that not as a piece of new workmanship from God's hand, but as a part of mankind who are propagated from the first parent, by the continued power of God's first creating word, *Be fruitful and multiply;* Gen. i. 28. And thus, though the soul really comes from God rather than from the parent, yet man is to be considered as propagating his kind, much in the same manner as brute creatures and all animals propagate their kind: And their descendants, or offspring, are tainted with any poison, disease, or painful infirmity, which is mingled with the blood or animal juices of their sires or their dams. And this is according to the law of creation, and it can hardly be otherwise in the nature of things.

You will say, man does not propagate his kind by the mere mechanism of flesh and blood, and animal ferments; for it is the original and constant creative decree of God that produces a new substance, a human soul, and joins it to this body; whereas the offspring of brutes are propagated, and come into existence, by the mere mechanical agency of flesh and blood, without any other particular act of the divine will or power, or any creation of a new substance. To this I answer,

Answer. That perhaps few, or none, of the common appearances of nature, or the constant daily events in the corporeal world, come to pass by mere † mechanism, or the impulse and necessary effects of the motions of the particles of matter without the influence of some superadded laws of nature, beside and beyond the necessary properties of matter; which laws proceed from God's constant uniform agency upon matter, such as the law of gravitation, or the mutual tendency of all the parts of matter towards each other, which is a law of nature, or decree of creation, and is in reality the constant uniform agency of God on the inanimate world: And some suppose elasticity, electricity, magnetism, &c. to be of the same kind, as well as all vitality in the vegetable and animal creatures.

And in this sense brutes propagate their kind, not merely by the mechanical motions of flesh and blood, but by some original creative decree of God, or constant law of nature, whereby matter is impelled into such particular vital motions and forms, and kindled into life in a succession of generations, by a constant uniform act or agency of the divine will.

Let me add also, that it is by this universal divine agency, all animals borrow their breath of life from the air, which is an extraneous substance, which yet is then counted a part of themselves, and is called their breath, and their life.

In like manner, when the infant-body of man is so far formed as to become fit for union with a rational soul, the soul then comes into existence, in union with the body, by an original creative decree of God, or a settled law of nature; and thus the man

* As abstruse and difficult as this question is, yet almost all parties of Christians, who acknowledge any thing of original degeneracy, are obliged to answer it, as well as those who are called calvinists.

† By the words "mechanism" and "mechanical," in this place, I mean only the mere effects arising from the natural and essential properties of motion and matter, considered only as a piece of solid extension moved: Sometimes the word "mechanism" is taken in a larger sense, so as to include all the superadded laws of nature or motion, which are impressed and maintained, through all the material creation, by the divine will; such as gravitation, mutual attraction and repulse, &c.

and the brute, in their long successions, are both formed by the power of that ancient law of creation, this almighty creative word, *Be fruitful and multiply.*

I add also, that the soul, though it be a distinct substance coming from God, yet coming into existence in this manner by a law of nature, becomes a part of the man as much as the breath of life, which is an extraneous substance borrowed from the air, or as the blood of the child, which is hourly made out of the food of the mother.

Reason II. In this view of things, the soul of the infant is not to be considered or judged of as a single separate being, but as always in union with the infant's flesh and blood, and as making up a compound creature of the human species, propagated from the parents as effectually to all intents and purposes, as though the soul itself proceeded directly from generation as well as the body.

Reason III. If Adam had maintained his innocency, the universal and original law of propagation would have been just the same as now it is; and the soul had been brought into existence and union in the same manner, and would have kept its original and native bias and inclination to holiness; for the animal body would then have promoted it, rather than led it astray, as now it does. And according to the first covenant, the soul of the child might have also hoped, or perhaps by prayer and dependence, have humbly claimed sanctifying influences, to preserve it from temptation, and to keep it innocent.

Reason IV. But since the soul, in the first moment of its being, belongs to a human body derived from the first man who sinned, and that according to the rules or laws of creation and providence, it becomes hereby a son or a daughter of fallen man, and according to the law of creation it is naturally involved in the same circumstances of ruin with its parent: As the buds and branches that grow out of a rotten tree fallen to the ground, partake of the corruption, and ruin, and speedy death of the stock; or as a feeble and diseased young brute animal partakes of the infirmities and diseases of its sire or dam; or as the child of a traitor is born a beggar, though his father were once a lord; or as the son of a lewd and diseased person derives perhaps both a lewd and diseased constitution from his parent.

Reason V. Then being one of the race of sinful man, the young creature comes into the world under the common estrangement of the whole race from God by sin, according to the original law of creation, and the covenant made with its forefather, whereby the descendants, or offspring, come under the same circumstances with the parent, whether good or bad: And thus the child has no just claim to preserving or securing grace, and amidst all the temptations of the flesh, has no right to any good influences or divine aids, but is left merely to the faculties of its intelligent nature. It is esteemed in the sight of God, as a part of the race that is fallen from their allegiance and from his protection, have lost his image and his favour, and have no hope but in and by the methods of recovering grace, revealed in the gospel.

And by the same supposition of the formation and union of the human soul, by some constant original law of creation, or nature, and acting as uniformly as gravitation on matter, we answer the difficulty of the soul's becoming subject to the sensations of pain and anguish: At its creation and union to the body, it becomes a child of Adam, and is exposed to the pains of nature, as a part of the curse coming on the first sinner, and on all his natural posterity, whose representative he both stood and fell. But there is hope

of deliverance in the gospel from the pains as well as the sins which came into human nature from our first parents; blessed be God for this relief!

To conclude; as I have acknowledged this to be the very chief point of difficulty in all the controversies about original sin, so I am doubtful whether this solution sets the matter in such a sufficient light, as to take away all remaining scruples from a curious and inquisitive mind. I confess it is the most probable hypothesis I can think of, and shall be glad to see this perplexing inquiry more happily answered. But if the case itself be matter of fact, that souls are defiled, and exposed to pain, by being united to human bodies so vitiated, we are sure it must be just and equitable, because God has thus ordered it, though we should not find out a happier solution of the difficulties that attend it, in this dark and imperfect state.

QUESTION VIII.

SUPPOSE IT WERE GRANTED, THAT THIS REPRESENTATION OF THINGS, IF IT WERE TRUE, WOULD IN A GREAT MEASURE ACCOUNT FOR THAT UNIVERSAL DELUGE OF SIN AND MISERY WHICH HAS OVERSPREAD MANKIND, YET WHAT REASON HAVE WE TO BELIEVE IT TO BE TRUE? DOES THE WORD OF GOD, WHICH IS OUR TRUEST AND SAFEST GUIDE, GIVE US THE SAME REPRESENTATION OF THINGS, OR SUPPORT THIS SCHEME?

ANSWER I. The difficulties and darknesses which attend this important question, "how came sin and misery into the world?" are so many and great, that if, by reasoning on these subjects, we can but find any hypothesis, or supposed scheme of transactions between God and man, which will give a tolerable solution of these difficulties, and lead us through this dark scene of providence, without any just imputation or reflection upon the wisdom, justice, and goodness of our Creator, it ought to have considerable weight with every reasoning and inquiring mind, if it be not contrary to Scripture, though it should not be asserted, and expressly maintained in Scripture. It was this same perplexing inquiry that led several of the heathens and Greek philosophers into many vain imaginations, and betrayed some of those professors of wisdom into various wild fooleries and atheistical impieties.

Some of them thought that all things were produced by mere chance; others ascribed it to a necessary fatality and irresistible connection of causes and effects; some of these allowed a first cause, or some divine being, to set things in motion at first, but without any subsequent interposure or government of a wise, a righteous, or a merciful being. The best of them, that is the platonics, fell into the doctrine of the pre-existence of all human souls, and thought that all of them had sinned in a former state, and were thrust down into these bodies, subject to such perverse appetites, unruly passions, and huge miseries, as a punishment for those former sins. Others indulged a fancy that there were two supreme beings, one the spring of all good, and the other the spring of all evil: The Persians also took up with this opinion, and even a sect of Christians was deluded with this doctrine, who were called Manichees. So great were the darknesses that surrounded this inquiry, "how came sin and misery, "that is, evil both natural and moral," to be so universal among men?"

It is evident that this general corruption and calamity, which has overspread all the race of man, carries in it, at first sight, such a hard or doubtful idea of the conduct of God, their Maker, and has raised in many a thoughtful person, such reflections upon the goodness and justice of God, and such hard thoughts of the almighty Being who formed them, that it ought to be esteemed a great happiness, if we can but by way of conjecture and humble reasoning find a probable method, whereby these difficulties may be relieved, and the objection against the goodness and justice of our Maker refuted or silenced.*

Answer II. Though God hath not thought fit to reveal to us at large in his word, all these particular transactions between himself and the first man whom he created, yet there might be all this, and more, revealed to the first man; and it might be set before him in full light, to secure his obedience and deter him from sinning.

But if we collect together all that is revealed concerning this subject, we shall find that the word of God leads us into many of the same solutions of these difficulties which our reasoning powers have proposed. Scripture gives us much the same representation of the entrance of sin and misery into the world, as we have already heard, if we will attend with diligence to the revelation which God has made, and this appears in the following particulars:

Proposition I. It is plainly taught us in Scripture, that God introduced mankind into the world by the formation of one single pair, one man and woman, whom he called Adam and Eve. Gen. ii. 7, *The Lord God formed man out of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul.* Verse 18, *And the Lord God said, it is not good that man should be alone: I will make him a help meet for him.* Verse 22, *The Lord made a woman out of the rib which he had taken from the man, and brought her unto the man.* Gen. i. 27, 28, *So God created man, male and female created he them; and God blessed them, and said to them, Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth.* Gen. iii. 20, *And Adam called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living.* Acts xvii. 26, *He hath made of one blood all nations of men to dwell on all the face of the earth.*

Proposition II. God created man at first in a holy and happy state, in his own likeness and in his own favour; Gen. i. 26, *And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness;* and that none of the brute creatures might molest or injure him, but all of them might be for his service, he said, *Let them have dominion over the fish, and the fowls, and the cattle, &c. so God created man in his own image;* verse 27 And

* Those who oppose the doctrine of original sin will neither allow our arguing from reason or revelation.

Our fathers, as well as some present writers, have abundantly proved this doctrine from several places of Scripture: And our adversaries have endeavoured to shew, from the light of reason, that it does not agree with the reason and nature of things, and therefore, say they, Scripture must be otherwise explained; and they are forced to labour hard to give some strained and perverse interpretations of it to support their scheme: And yet when we come in our turn to search what the reason of things will say on this subject, as is done in the present treatise, then it is replied, "why do we not immediately take our account from Scripture?" And we are upbraided, that we set a candle before the noon-day sun, that we weaken the evidence of a certain rule by bringing over it what is doubtful and fallacious.

Whereas all that I have attempted to do here, is to shew that reason goes a great way to teach and prove what Scripture asserts, and that reason and Scripture agree, as far as reason goes, in one and the same account of this matter. And thus we confirm our belief of this great article of original sin, which we learn both from observation and reason, as well as revelation. Sometimes indeed we introduce one first in order, and sometimes the other, and we place this subject in every light, both of Scripture and reason, while we are representing their mutual agreement? And what is there in this conduct that is worthy of accusation, reproach, or blame?

what this image consisted in, besides in his spiritual nature, and his immortal state, and his dominion over other creatures, we are told by St. Paul, *Ephes.* iv. 24, where the apostle speaks of *the new man,* or the restoration of fallen man to his primitive temper, *which,* says he, *after God,* that is, after the likeness of God, *is created in righteousness and true holiness. Eccles.* vii. 29, Solomon assures us, *God hath made man upright.* And Moses says, when God had finished all his creation, he surveyed it, and found it all agreeable to his mind; Gen. i. 31, *God saw every thing that he had made, and behold it was very good:* It was all according to his idea and his will, and well-pleasing in his sight. Man, the last of his creatures, as well as all the rest, was *very good,* was holy and happy.

Proposition III. God originally appointed, that Adam when innocent should produce an offspring in his own holy image, or in the same circumstances of holiness and happiness in which he himself was created: And appointed also, on the other hand, that if he sinned and fell from his innocent state, he should propagate his kind in his own sinful image, which may probably be implied in those words; Gen. i. 26—28, *God said, Let us make man in our image, and let them have dominion over fish and fowl, &c.* And *God created man, male and female, and blessed them, and said, Be fruitful and multiply, and have dominion over the fish, and the fowl, &c.* that is, when you are multiplied, let your seed maintain this sovereignty, this dominion, which is a part of my image, in your several succeeding generations.

And Gen. v. 1—3, *In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God he made him; male and female created he them, and blessed them, and called their name Adam,* or man. *And Adam lived one hundred and thirty years,* that is, after his sin and his loss of the holy image of God,* *and begat a son in his own likeness, after his image,* verse 3, that is, his own sinful and mortal image, *and called his name Seth. And Adam died,* verse 5—8. *And Seth* also *lived, and begat sons and daughters,* in this mortal and sinful state, *and he died also,* as Adam his father did before him, and his children after him.

It is not to be supposed that Moses, in this brief history of the first generations of men, should make such a particular repetition of the image or likeness of God, in which Adam was created, in this place, unless he had designed to set the comparison in a fair light, between Adam's begetting his son *in his own* sinful and mortal image, or *likeness,* whereas he himself was created *in God's* holy and immortal *image:* And more especially when the design of the chapter is to shew how every generation of the sons of Adam died, it is obvious that Moses designed also to shew how this course and custom of dying came into the world, that is, by Adam's bringing his posterity into the world in his own image, as fallen from God and liable to death.

Proposition IV. God was pleased to put the man, whom he had made, upon a trial of his obedience for a season; he placed him in a garden of Eden or pleasure, he gave him a free use of the creatures for his comfort, but forbid him to eat of the fruit of one tree, even *the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; for* said he, *in the day that thou eatest* of it, *thou shalt surely die;* Gen. ii. 17; that is, thou shalt from that time be liable

* That Adam lost this moral image of God by sin, is plainly implied *Ephes.* iv. 24, where we are said to be *renewed* after this moral image, *viz.* holiness.

to death: In which threatening were doubtless included all the infirmities, pains, and miseries of this life, which tend toward death and destruction, together with death and destruction at the end of them.

And it is not at all improbable, that God should reveal to Adam, that he should be the representative of his posterity, and that the consequences of his obedience, or of his sin, should fall upon them as well as upon himself. All that appears as narrative and real fact in the Bible, might be represented in the springs and causes thereof to Adam, so far as God pleased.

Proposition V. As Adam was under a law whose sanction threatened mortality and death upon disobedience, and there was a symbol or seal of it, viz. *the tree of knowledge of good and evil;* Gen. ii. 16, 17; so it is most highly probable, or rather certain, that God favoured him with a covenant of life, and a promise of life and immortality upon his obedience, because there was another tree appointed to be a symbol, or seal, of this covenant and promise, that is, *the tree of life:* So that if he had not sinned against God, he should have eat of that tree, and been established in immortality. Gen. ii. 9, *Out of the ground the Lord God made to grow every tree, &c. the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil;* the one to be a seal of the promise of life upon his obedience, the other a seal of the threatening of death on his disobedience: And therefore, after his sin God would not suffer him to taste of the tree of life; Gen. iii. 22, 24, *Now lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and live for ever,—God drove out the man from the garden.*

And we may suppose this tree of life did not merely signify the confirmation of Adam in life and immortality, if he had continued obedient, but that it also included some advance of happiness, since the fruits of this very tree are made use of in the New Testament, particularly *Rev.* xxii. 2, to signify the advanced delights and satisfactions which true Christians shall enjoy in heaven, by the grace and salvation of Jesus Christ.

It may also be observed here, that some ingenious and rational divines have supposed, that each of these two trees, *viz.* that of knowledge and that of life, bore fruits naturally suited to their federal or sacramental design: That the fruit of the tree of knowledge being poisonous, would convey into the blood of the eater, such juices as should irritate irregular appetites and passions, should raise them to an immoderate degree, and should also vitiate the vital powers of man with diseases, and by degrees bring him down to death. And that the fruit of the tree of life being suited to maintain the vital principles of animal nature, should keep the flesh and blood in a temperate state of health, and preserve the appetites and passions in that moderation, as to be always subject to reason and within the rules of innocence: And that it had also some latent virtue, to heal all manner of disorders which could possibly come upon human nature, if any could come in a state of innocence and virtue. It is described as a plant both of healing and of immortality, *Rev.* xxii. 2. And God would not suffer Adam, who was guilty of death, to taste of it after his fall, lest he should raise some false hope thereby to have healed himself of all the poisonous effects of the forbidden tree of knowledge, and should neglect the salvation of the promised Messiah.

But the chief reason for which I mention these two trees here, is to shew, that as there was an appointed figure, seal, or symbol of immortal life and happiness, as well as of evil and death, both growing in this garden of paradise: So there was a real covenant or

promise of life made to persevering obedience, as well as a law that threatened misery and death to man, if he were disobedient to his Maker.

Perhaps also we might further prove, that there was a covenant of life and promise of immortality and advanced happiness, upon condition of perfect obedience, from many texts of Scripture.

The first is *Rom.* ii. 7—9, where the apostle is rather representing the terms of the covenant of works, than the terms of the covenant of grace, and says, *God will render indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil; but eternal life, with glory and honour, to them who by patient continuance in well doing, seek for glory and honour, and immortality.* And verse 10, *Glory, honour, and peace to every man that worketh good.* Here let it be observed, that the apostle, from the eighteenth verse of the first chapter to the twenty-first verse of the third, is evidently laying all mankind under condemnation by the law, and not describing the salvation which comes by the covenant of grace; and therefore, he uses the words *glory, honour, peace, immortality, eternal life,* which are the promises of a covenant of works, but not a word of pardon, grace, or salvation, which are the promises of *a better covenant:* And he represents the means of attaining these original blessings to be *working of good, and patient continuance in well doing,* ὑπομονὴ ἐν ἔργῳ ἀγαθῷ, that is, continuance in one good work without interruption or imperfection; but not a word of repentance and faith, as the means of obtaining these blessings. These are therefore the proper terms of the law of innocency and covenant of works, and this is the promise made to perfect obedience, by which no man now since the fall can be justified, as is expressly asserted, *Rom.* iii. 20, though innocent Adam might have attained *immortality, eternal life, honour, and glory, by it.*

Text II. It is the covenant of works, with the terms of it, as expressed in the books of Moses, which is cited by St. Paul, Gal. iii. 12, *The man that doeth* the commands *shall live in* or by *them:* And *Rom.* x. 5, this is called *the righteousness of the law,* that is, that which entitles a man to the promise of life. And Rom. vii. 10, *The commandment of the law, which was ordained to life,* shews that life and immortality would have been the reward of obedience to it.

Text III. It will add perhaps some force to this argument, in order to prove a promise of glory and immortality made to Adam, if we consider, that when the apostle expresses the fallen state of man, he says, Rom. iii. 23, *All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God,* that is, have lost all hope of that glory of God, that glorious state in immortality which God promised, and to which man would have been entitled by his obedience, as chapter ii. verse 7, before cited.

Text IV. There is another text also which has been used to prove, that Adam was not merely under a law with a threatening, but also under a covenant with a promise; and that is, Hosea vi. 7, *They like men have transgressed the covenant:* But in the original it is, "they have transgressed the covenant like Adam;" which imports that Adam was under a covenant of life, as well as a law that threatened death: For there must be a promise of life, as well as threatening of death, to make a law become a covenant. But I proceed to the next proposition.

Proposition VI. Adam broke the law of his Maker, lost his image and his favour, forfeited the hopes of immortality, and exposed himself to the threatening of God, to many sorrows in life, and at last to death; Gen. iii. 17, *And God said to Adam, Because*

thou hast eaten of the tree which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it; cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life: In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat thy bread, till thou return unto the ground; for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.

Now that Adam lost the image of God, that is, broke his habit of holiness, or destroyed the inward principle of virtue and piety, is evident from the nature of things, as I have shewn under the Third Question, Proposition the Eighth. By making such an inroad upon conscience, by sinning against so much light, by giving such a loose to sinful appetite, by losing both his own delightful sense of the favour and love of God, and thereby losing his own love to God; his reason and conscience grew weak to subdue or restrain his inclinations to evil things, his corrupt appetites still prevailed further upon him, for he was forsaken of God, and had not any peculiar aids from heaven to resist temptation.

And that he lost also the favour of God and some peculiar privileges of the state of innocence, is plain; for he who used to converse with God with pleasure, and was well acquainted with *the voice of the Lord God in the garden*, by former delightful converse with him, Gen. iii. 8, now *heard the voice of the Lord in the garden, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord:* And when God called after him, *verse* 9, Adam said, *I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and hid myself.*

Here it may be noted, that it is very probable, though Adam and Eve had no garments in their state of innocency, yet they were not entirely naked, but were covered with a bright shining light, or glory, as a token of their own innocence, and the divine favour and presence; such glory as angels sometimes appear in, and such as Christ wore on the holy mount, such as arrayed him like a bright cloud at his ascent to heaven, and such as saints shall put on at the resurrection, when they shall be raised in power and glory. But God may be justly supposed to take away his clothing of glory from them, upon their sin, as a token of his withdrawing his favour and presence: For without this supposition how could they be said to be more naked after their sin than they were before? And how could our first parents be painfully sensible of any nakedness, if they had not lost something which clothed them?

God also further manifested his displeasure, by cursing the ground for their sakes, and pronouncing upon Adam and Eve many sorrows, pains, and labours, in this life, and their returning to dust in death; *verses* 16—19.

Proposition VII. Adam after his sin propagated his kind, or produced his offspring, according to the law of nature; not in the moral likeness or image of God, not *in righteousness and true holiness*, but *in his own* sinful *likeness*, as one fallen from God, with irregular passions, appetites to evil, corrupt inclinations, and sinful nature. See *Gen.* v. 1—3, cited under Proposition III. Those expressions in *Job* seem also to refer to the same degeneracy: *What is man, that he should be clean; or the son of man, that he should be righteous? Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one.* Job xv. 14; and *chapter* xiv. 4. David also says the same thing, Psalm li. 5, *Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.*

Some persons would persuade us, that these words are only an hyperbolical aggravation of David's early sins, and propensity to evil from his childhood: But the text is strong and plain, in asserting sin some way to belong to his very conception, and to be

conveyed from his natural parents, which is a different idea from his actual sins, or even from his early propensity to sin in his infancy: It asserts and shews the cause, or spring, both of this evil propensity, and of his actual sinning, which operated before he was born: So that these expressions cannot be an hyperbole, or figurative exaggeration of what is, but it seems to be a downright fiction of what is not, if original pravity be not thus conveyed and derived.

If we look into the beginning of the Bible, we shall find Moses describing the universal corruption of mankind. Gen. vi. 5, *Every imagination of the thoughts of the heart of man was only evil continually;* and verse 12, *All flesh had corrupted its way on the earth;* and chapter viii. 22, *The imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth.* So universal and so early a corruption must be supposed to spring from an universal and early cause, that is, their propagation from a sinful original.

That the ancient Jews were acquainted with this doctrine, and that this was the sentiment, which they had derived from their reading the Old Testament, will sufficiently appear to any one from the apocryphal writings, which were the product of some wise and knowing men among them; See 2 Esdras iii. 21, *For the first Adam bearing a wicked heart, transgressed and was overcome, and so be all they that be born of him. Thus infirmity was made permanent, and the law also, in the heart of the people, with the malignity of the root,* so that the good departed away, and the evil abode still.* 2 Esdras iv. 30, *For the grain of evil seed hath been sown in the heart of Adam from the beginning, that is, by the devil; and how much ungodliness hath it brought up unto this time! And how much shall it yet bring forth till the time of threshing shall come!* 2 Esdras vii. 11, *When Adam transgressed my statutes, then was decreed what is now done: Then were the entrances of this world made narrow,* that is, full of pain, as the Hebrew imports, in which language, probably, this was first written: *They are but few, and evil, full of peril, and very painful: For the entrances of the elder world were wide and sure, and brought immortal fruit;* that is, in the world of innocency, men would have been born without pain and lived to immortality. Verse 46, *It had been better,* that is, happier for man, *not to have given the earth to Adam, or else when it was given him, to have restrained him from sinning: For what profit is it for men now in this present time to live in heaviness, and after death to look for punishment? O thou, Adam, what hast thou done? For though it was thou that sinned, thou art not fallen alone, but we all that come of thee.* Eccles. xl. 1, *Great travail is created for every man, and a heavy yoke is upon the sons of Adam, from the day that they go out of their mother's womb, till the day that they return to the mother of all things,* that is, to earth. These were the sentiments of the ancient Jews.

St. Paul mentions his sentiments on this subject in his Epistles to Rome and Corinth, which shall be cited immediately; for he had well learned this doctrine. Nor do I think that text, *Ephes.* ii. 1—4, can be well dismissed from the service of this argument, where the apostle tells the Ephesians, *you,* gentiles, *were dead in trespasses and sins, wherein you walked according to the course of this world—and the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also, we,* that is, Jews, who were

* The meaning seems to be this, though the law or rule of duty still remain written in the hearts of men, yet there is such a malignity, or sinful tendency, derived from Adam our root, that the principle of obedience is departed, and the principle of transgression abides, while the conscience preserves the rule of duty in man's heart or soul, and yet he has a propensity or inclination to disobey it.

the peculiar people of God, or we Christians, who are now sanctified, even we also, *had our conversation, in time past, in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others,* that is, as heathens; *even we were dead in sin,* verse 5. This is the plain description of all mankind, both Jews and gentiles. Surely they were not born alive by nature, in a state of righteousness, and afterwards made themselves dead in sin; but they were dead-born, that is, born in sin by nature, or through a corrupted nature derived from their parents, and were children of wrath by nature, or exposed to the anger of God. But this belongs rather to the next proposition.

Proposition VIII. As Adam produced his offspring like himself, destitute of the image of God, or defiled with sinful inclinations, so he also produced them destitute of the favour of God, or in a state of disfavour with their Maker, because under the same sentence of condemnation, misery, and death, together with himself. As I have proved this before, by shewing that pains and agonies, and often death itself, which is the appointed punishment of sin, seizes upon children immediately from their birth, before they are capable of committing actual sin, so there are some Scriptures which lead us into the same sentiment, as Job xiv. 1, *Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble:* That is, his short life, and his troubles or miseries proceed from his very birth, or his propagation from his sinful and mortal parents: Otherwise God would not have appointed his noblest creature in this world to have been born to trouble. Yet this is the case: *Man is born to trouble, as the sparks fly upwards;* Job v. 7; that is, naturally, for it is owing to his birth, and his natural derivation from a sinful stock: We are a miserable race of beings, springing from a corrupted and dying root, prone to sin, and liable to sorrows and sufferings.

Yet, let it be observed here, concerning one man, even Jesus Christ, that though he be the son of Adam in a large sense, yet by this propagation he falls not under that guilt and condemnation, nor that degeneracy of nature and those sinful propensities, which are conveyed to the rest of Adam's posterity: And the reason is plain, *viz.* because he was not the son of Adam by natural generation or propagation, but by a miraculous operation of God and his Spirit, taking part of the body, or flesh and blood, of the Virgin Mary, and making a man-child of it; as *Luke* i. 34, 35. Now this part of the body of the virgin, which was assumed by Christ, being not a human person, but mere animal matter, came not under the general condemning sentence of Adam, and of all those which are naturally derived from him; and it was also purified from any inherent vicious ferments, which might reside in the animal nature of the virgin: And thus Christ had no original sin inherent; nor even imputed by the same constitution, and on the same account, as other children have; but was perfectly innocent; and consequently he had not been exposed to suffer sickness and death, which other children are exposed to, nor subject to any of our sorrows, if he had not been a voluntary undertaker to rescue and redeem fallen man, by having all our sins imputed to him, and suffered in our stead. But this is only a thought by the way.

Let us proceed farther in the proof of this sentence of condemnation and death, coming upon all mankind for the sin of Adam; and let St. Paul, in the fifth chapter of the *Epistle to the Romans,* be brought as a considerable witness. I think this chapter cannot be fairly construed to any other sense. See *verses* 12—14. On these and the following verses I desire to make these plain and easy remarks:

Remark I. Here Adam and Christ are set up as two distinct heads or representatives of their several families: Adam was the head of all mankind, who became sinful and mortal by the corruption of our nature; and Christ was the head of the new creation, or of the saints, who obtain righteousness and life by divine grace. Verse 12—14, the apostle says, *As by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, so death passed upon all men; for that all have sinned;* or, as some render it, in whom all have sinned: And that with full as much or more justice than Levi was said to "pay tithes in Abraham," his great grandfather; *Heb.* vii. 9. And then the apostle gives this reason to prove this headship of Adam: *For*, saith he, *until the law*, that is, from the creation of man till the law of Moses, *sin was in the world; but sin is not imputed where there is no law:* This cannot mean, where there is no explicit and positive law, for the heathens have sin imputed to them, who had no such explicit positive plain law given them; but his meaning is, that sin is never imputed where there is no law divinely established, no constitution of duty and penalty at all. *Yet*, saith he, *death reigned from Adam to Moses;* that is, yet sin was imputed and punished by death, even upon all mankind, both great and small, before Moses's law: And the inference is, therefore, there was some law, or constitution, during all the time from Adam to Moses, by and according to which, sin was imputed to mankind; and death was executed upon them according to this law. Now what law could that be, besides the law, or constitution, which said to Adam, as a representative and surety for all his posterity, *In the day thou* sinnest *thou shalt die?*

Remark II. Observe that the apostle carries his argument yet further: Sin was imputed, and *death reigned*, or was executed *even upon those that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression;* that is, who had not sinned personally against an express and positive command given to themselves, as Adam had done. Now this must include children, or infants, if it does not chiefly refer to them; for *death reigned over them,* death was executed upon them, and this must be by some law, or constitution, by which sin was in some respect imputed to them, who had not committed actual sin; for without some such law, or constitution, sin would never have been imputed, nor death executed on children. Yet further,

Remark III. Let us consider that death does not come upon those who had not sinned actually and personally as a mere affliction, or as a necessary and natural effect, or mere consequent of their father Adam's sin and death; but it was, at first, the threatening of the law, and now it is a proper and legal punishment of sin: For it is said, that this sin brought condemnation *upon all men*, verse 18. Now this is a legal term, and shews us that death is not only a natural, but a penal evil, and comes upon infants considered as accounted guilty and condemned, not for their own sins, for they had none, but for the sin of Adam their legal head, or representative, and surety, according to this constitution, or law, or covenant.*

In this eighteenth verse, the expression is very strong: *By the offence of one,*

* The author has read what opposition has been made to this natural and obvious exposition of this argument, as handled by the apostle in this Epistle, and he finds such perverse distortions of the Scriptures from their plain sense, and such absurd consequences rising from this opposition, that he leaves what he has here said, as sufficient to justify his exposition, to the understanding of a sincere and honest reader, notwithstanding all the boasting pretences to Scripture, and solemn exhortations to attend to it, which are introduced on the other side.

judgment came upon all men to condemnation. It is true, the words "*judgment came*" are not in the original; but if these words be not supplied, you must necessarily supply some other word of equal importance to make sense, or you must repeat the word *offence*, or *sin*, or *guilt*; and say, *by the offence*, or sin, *of one* man, sin *came upon all men*, who are the seed of Adam, or it was imputed to them, *to condemnation.* And it is possible this may be the most proper way of supplying that elliptical way of speaking, *viz.* by repeating the word *sin* or *offence.* And so in the following part of the verse, *by the righteousness of one*, not *the free gift*, but perhaps it should be, *righteousness came upon all those who are the seed of Christ, to justification of life.** And it may be yet further remarked,

Remark IV. That in the original greek, it is not said, *by the offence of one*, but *by one offence*, that is, by the single offence of Adam, when he stood as the head or surety of all his offspring, and brought sin and death upon them by his disobedience, as verse 19, *by one man's disobedience, many were made*, or constituted, *sinners*, κατεστάθησαν, that is, became subject to guilt and death by a righteous constitution: And the sixteenth verse seems to have the same meaning, where one single offence is represented as condemning us through Adam, and stands in a way of antithesis, or opposition, to the many offences which are pardoned through Jesus Christ.

Remark V. There is yet a farther reason implied in this chapter, to prove that Adam conveyed sin and death to his posterity, not merely as the natural spring or parent of their race by propagation, but as a federal head and representative of all his offspring, and involved them in his own guilt, or liableness to misery and death by his own act of disobedience. Take it thus: As Adam and Christ are here represented by the apostle as the two springs of sin and righteousness, of death and life to mankind, which is agreed by all in their expositions of the last half of *Rom.* v. and 1 *Cor.* xv. so the one is represented as a type and figure of the other. Adam was a figure, or type, of Christ in this very respect; *Rom.* v. 14; and Christ is called *the second man*, and *the last Adam*, for this very reason, 1 *Cor.* xv. 45, 47, 49. As one was the spring of life, so the other was the spring of death, to all their particular seed or offspring; 1 *Cor.* xv. 22, 23.

Now Christ is not only a spring of life, as he conveys a new nature, and a principle of holiness to his seed, but he is represented as the spring of justifying righteousness, or of justification, and of eternal life and happiness; as procuring it for them by his own personal actions, by his own obedience and sufferings: So Adam is not only a spring of sin and death to all mankind, who are his seed, as he conveys a sinful nature to them, but as he brings sin and guilt, condemnation and death, upon them by his own personal disobedience. And, indeed, this is what the apostle, *Rom.* v. from the fifteenth verse to the end, chiefly insists upon, *viz.* "it is by one man's righteousness, the free gift," or rather righteousness, "came upon all men," that is, all his seed, "unto justification of life; and it is by the offence of one man, all men," who are the seed of Adam, "are laid under condemnation;" *verse* 18, "As it is by the obedience of one man many were made righteous, or justified, so by one man's disobedience many were made sinners," or stood as guilty and condemned before God.†

* Or if the word *all*, in this place, should be construed to mean all mankind, it is still the righteousness of Christ, which has provided this way of justification for all men, or this offer of justification to all men, though all do not actually accept of it.

† All the texts cited under this Question are explained and vindicated more at large by many writers on this subject, elder and later.

It is true indeed, that Christ trains up and prepares his children for eternal life, by making them his children, by renewing them after the image of God his Father, or after his own likeness, or by giving them a holy nature, a principle of divine life, without which it is impossible they should be made actual partakers of happiness; and so he is typified by Adam, who conveyed a sinful nature, or his own sinful image to his children: But the chief thing which the apostle seems to have in his eye, in this chapter, is the conveyance of condemnation and death to the seed of Adam, and a justifying righteousness and eternal life to the seed of Christ, by their being the common heads or representatives, as well as the fathers or fountains of their distinct households or offsprings; the one involving his offspring, whom he represented, in his own sin and death; and the other acquiring for his offspring, whom he represented, righteousness, that is, a right to life and eternal happiness.

Objection I. Some persons have supposed, that it confuses and perplexes our ideas, to treat of mankind thus as one collective body, or to suppose that the race of man have ruined themselves in Adam their head; whereas, say they, the Scripture often tells us, that *God will judge every man* personally and particularly *according to his* own *works.* I answer,

Answer. It takes away all this supposed confusion, and makes our ideas very distinct and plain, if we consider that in the general sentence of ruin and condemnation for the first sin of Adam, mankind may be reckoned as one collective body, under one head, falling under this universal condemnation by the original law of creation, and the constitution of the covenant of works, since it is evidently represented in this manner in several verses in *Romans* v. 12—21. Whereas, in the last judgment, every one will be personally judged, and acquitted, or condemned, according to their personal behaviour, under the several particular constitutions or dispensations, both of law or grace, which they have enjoyed.

Objection II. We are informed by the word of God, that there have been two general fathers, *viz.* Adam and Noah: Now there are three particulars that do summarily and distinctly contain the blessings, endowments, and pre-eminence, conferred upon Adam in his innocent state, 1. The blessing of propagation. 2. The dominion over the brutes. 3. The image of God, in which he was made: All which are contained in *Gen.* i. 27, 28. Now the very same blessings and marks of excellency are by God himself declared and pronounced more expressly and emphatically at the restoration of the world by Noah and his sons, and for the most part in the same words: Gen. ix. 1, *God blessed Noah and his sons, and said to them, Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth.* Verse 2, *The fear of you, and the dread of you, shall be upon every beast, and fowl, and fish, &c. They are delivered into your hand; every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you,* that is, you have licence to kill and eat them. And again it is said, Gen. ix. 6, *Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: For in the image of God made he man.*

Now, say the objectors, this is a clear and undoubted demonstration that the *judgment* which *came on all men to condemnation,* and the expulsion of man out of Paradise, did no way alter the primary relation in which God stood to man, and man to God. The love, regard, and providence of God towards mankind in general, were still the same as they were to man at his first formation; and our nature, as derived from

Noah, is attended with the same blessings, endowments, and pre-eminence, both natural and moral, which were pronounced or conferred on Adam, our first natural head, as soon as he was created: And we no more derived a corrupt nature from our second natural head, than we should have done from the first, if he had never sinned: And whatsoever came upon us, in consequence of the judgment to condemnation, *viz.* death, hard toil or labour, and sorrow, came upon us no further, nor in any sense or degree, than what is perfectly consistent with the original blessing pronounced on Adam at his first creation.

Answer. This objection, as formidable as it seems, may have complete and effectual answers given to it in this manner: It is readily granted that all that is contained in the blessing given to Noah is very consistent with that curse of God which came upon all men by the first sin; but that curse is not consistent with the original blessing that was given to Adam: And though the words are, in the main, much the same, yet if we review the history and context, we shall find the blessing of Adam and Noah differ greatly from each other in all the three particulars mentioned.

1. It is evident that the blessing first mentioned relates chiefly to propagation, and the continuance and support of man on the earth; but Adam's blessing was without those multiplied pains and sorrows, which, after the first sin, fell upon women in child-birth: It was a blessing of sustentation, or nourishment of man on the earth, without hard toil and sweat of the brows: It was a blessing without a curse on the ground to hinder or destroy the fruitfulness thereof: It was a blessing without death and returning to our dust, which hinders the replenishing of the earth: Whereas the blessing of Noah did not take away the pains of child-bearing from women, nor the hard toil and sweat of men, nor that threatened death, which dispeoples the earth continually.

Let it be observed also, that this blessing on Noah seems directly to refer to that vast desolation which was brought on the earth, and the lives of men, by the flood, as the context plainly shews; and that God would not repeat this stroke, nor suffer the earth to be depopulated by beasts or men; *Gen.* ix. 1—7.

And I add further, though Lamech seemed to have the spirit of prophecy, when *he called his son Noah, saying, This same shall comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hand, because of the ground which the Lord hath cursed;* Gen. v. 29; yet the curse coming upon the ground abides still, in a greater measure, from Adam to this day, for it brings forth thorns and thistles in abundance. Now Noah might well be said to comfort his fellow-labourers on the ground, since he *began to be a husbandman, and planted a vineyard;* Gen. ix. 20; that is, he invented, or rather greatly improved the art of husbandry and cultivation of the earth, and thereby lightened much of the toil of man and the curse.

2. To Adam was given *dominion* over the brutes, which carries in it more than merely the blessing of Noah, *viz. That the fear of you, and the dread of you, shall be upon every beast, &c.* For notwithstanding this fear and dread of the human form and stature, which, in many instances, appears amongst the brutal creation, yet sometimes, ever since Noah's blessing, they now bite or sting men to death, and sometimes tear them to pieces, which calamitous disasters would never have befallen innocent Adam, or his innocent seed; for it was sin only that brought death into the world.

And if Noah and his sons had licence to kill and eat birds and beasts, which was

not given to Adam, a very ingenious writer, Doctor Cheyne, the physician, supposes that this was designed in the providence of God to shorten the lives of men after the flood, thereby to diminish or limit their great wickedness: And probably it had this effect to shorten life, which vegetable food would have prolonged.

3. *The image of God*, in which Adam was made at first, consisted eminently, if we will believe St. Paul, *in righteousness and true holiness;* Eph. iv. 24; for the Christian is required to *put off the old man*, that is, the sinful temper which he brought into the world with him, *which is corrupt, and to be renewed in the spirit of* his *mind*, to *put on the new man*, or holy temper, *which after God*, that is, in resemblance of God, *is created in righteousness and true holiness.* Whereas that part of the image of God, which remained after the fall, was the natural image of God, *viz.* the spiritual faculties and immortality of the soul, or the political image of God in a degree of dominion over the creatures; so the image of God signifies, 1 *Cor.* ii. 7. Or perhaps in the "corporeal image, or form," that is, in that majesty of stature and countenance wherein God himself appeared and conversed with Adam in the garden; but the moral image was lost or defaced, or else it could not be said to be renewed.

I think it is sufficiently evident, that the blessing given to Adam in innocency, and that given to Noah after the fall, differed in such very important things, that the one was consistent with the condemnation and curse for sin, and the other was not: And consequently the race of man is far from standing in the love and favour of God, in the same manner as Adam stood while he was innocent.

Thus in a few pages, I think, I have made it appear, that the holy Scripture, both in the Old and New Testament, and the jewish church in the intermediate time, seem to give us the same sentiments of the conveyance of sin, misery, and death, from the first man Adam to all his offspring, and encourage us to receive, as divine truth, that same doctrine of original sin, which human reason approves as most probable.

QUESTION IX.

WHAT CAN THE LIGHT OF NATURE DISCOVER CONCERNING THE PROPER PENALTY DUE TO THE SIN OF MAN, OR THE PROPER PUNISHMENT INFLICTED ON MAN FOR SIN?

FIRST, Let it be observed here, that we must distinguish between the natural consequences of sin, and the legal penalty appointed for it by God as a Governor. The question therefore is not, "what can the light of nature discover of the dreadful consequences of sin among mankind?" But "what can it discover to be the proper penalty for sin appointed or inflicted by the Maker and Governor of the world."* After this distinction we may proceed to answer these inquiries according to the following propositions:

* I know it has been said, upon some occasions, that God, as the wise Creator and Governor of the world, has appointed such a connection between sin and sorrow, that the natural effects, or consequents of sin may be reckoned the appointed or legal penalties of it. And, no doubt, there is so far a truth in it, as that, on some occasions, it may be proper to set things in this light, to shew the wisdom of Providence. But still it must be acknowledged there is a real difference between the natural connection of things by God as Creator, and the established or appointed laws and rules of government, made by the same God as a Ruler of the world: And this will plainly appear in what follows.

Proposition I. The remorse or anguish of conscience is not so properly a punishment inflicted of God upon man for sin; but it is rather a natural consequent or effect of guilt. It is an inward vexation of mind, that arises when the sinner seriously considers and reflects on the provocation he has given to his almighty Maker by his own folly and rebellion, and a painful fear and expectation of the vengeance due to such personal crimes. This can neither be transferred nor conveyed to any other person whatsoever, but is confined to the heart or conscience of the criminal: It flows from his own consciousness of his own personal offence, which consciousness can belong only to himself, and can raise those sharp inward self-reproaches in none but himself.

Proposition II. Man's continuance in sin after his first crime, and the sinful inclinations and growing depravity of his heart, whether they be considered as in himself, or as communicated to his offspring, cannot properly be inflicted by the hand of God as a penal evil, or as a legal punishment for his first sin: For though man be a sinner, God remains eternally holy, and he cannot infuse any degree of unholiness into the nature of his creatures, nor constrain them by any positive influence to continue in their disobedience, though they have begun to disobey him.

It follows, therefore, that the continuance of man in a course of sin, his vicious inclinations, and the depravity of his nature, whether abiding and increasing in himself, or transmitted to his offspring, must be conceived rather as the natural effect and consequence of his first disobedience to God, contrary to the laws of his reason and conscience, as I have shewn under Question III. Propositions VIII. IX. These are not to be esteemed as a proper penalty, or punishment, inflicted by the hand of God, his Maker or his Governor.

Yet it must be acknowledged too, that had there not been such a federal representation of all the race of men, in, or by their first parent as their surety, whereby the children were fallen under the general sentence of condemnation together with their parents; surely I think a just and gracious God would never have suffered the innocent children of a criminal parent to be infected and tainted with the vicious ferments of flesh and blood, and those corrupt appetites and passions which are now transmitted to children from that first parent; but he would have found a way to prevent that sinful contagion. See Question II. Propositions IV. V. VI.

But now it may be fairly allowed, since children are involved in this general and original condemnation by the sin of their parent, the great God, as an offended Governor, lets his appointed course of nature take its way, and communicate the natural effect of one man's sin to his offspring in the depravation of their temper, and vicious inclinations.*

And it may be further allowed, that man having provoked his Maker by sin, and he, with his offspring, lying under condemnation, they may be all left under the assaults of numerous temptations, and they have forfeited all manner of assistances that they might otherwise have hoped for from their Maker against new temptations and new dangers of sinning; so that God may leave man to his own evil appetites, and the inclinations of his corrupt heart; and then he has only the natural powers of his understanding and conscience left him to resist temptations from within and without, which powers are naturally darkened and weakened by his fall.

Proposition III. Man having once broke the law of his Maker, and violated his

* See the objections and answers, at the end of the First Essay.

allegiance to the universal Governor of the world, hath for ever deprived himself of all hope of obtaining or recovering any special favours from his Maker by perfect obedience; for he can never undo the evil that he hath done: He who hath sinned but once, can never more plead innocence, or acquire a right to any blessing which he might hope for if he had continued innocent and obedient. Whether this may be esteemed only as a natural consequent of sin, I will not now dispute; but it rather seems a penal forfeiture of all his hopes, and of his Maker's further favours.

And this hope of favour from his Maker and his God, to be obtained by perfect obedience, is still put further out of the reach of man, when it is evident he continues to practise disobedience, and multiplies his offences against God, his Maker, in the course of life.

Proposition IV. Man having sinned against a Being so greatly superior to himself in worth and excellency, as well as in authority, he could never do or suffer any thing by way of recompence or penalty, that would make full atonement or satisfaction to God for his offence.

1. All that he could do, in a way of obedience or service for time to come, would be no more than his duty, which he owes to his Maker by the law of nature; and if he had not sinned, God has a right to all his duty; and therefore future obedience could never atone for a past sin.

2. All that man could suffer would make no satisfaction for the offence: For if offences amongst our fellow-creatures of different characters, such as a neighbour, a brother, a father, a king, are aggravated according to the character and dignity of the person offended, then the offence against God is as highly aggravated above all offences of fellow-creatures, as the nature of God is superior to the nature of creatures: And if this be so, then every offence against an infinite God carries a sort of infinity in the nature of it: And divine wisdom only can fix the proper punishment for such offences, though divine goodness may join with wisdom, to set the actual limits of it.

Proposition V. But thus much we may infer by our own reason, with more evidence and certainty, that man by his sin against his Maker, has forfeited all his Maker's benefits. The great God having given man all that he has, *viz.* his nature and existence, the life of his body and soul, all his powers, his comforts, and his hopes; and this God, being offended and provoked by the sin of his creature, man, who has, by wilful rebellion, renounced his allegiance; this God, I say, has a just right to resume all that he has given him; he may take away all his own favours from a rebel, he may annihilate and destroy him utterly, both soul and body: And by this utter destruction, man is punished with the everlasting loss of his being and consciousness, his soul and body, and all their comforts; which destruction, as it is due to every sin against God, so perhaps it is a punishment not improper to be inflicted for the least sin; and yet it is in some sort commensurate to the infinite evil contained in sin, as it is a loss of all blessings for an infinite duration, that is, for ever and ever.

But since, in actual transgressions, there are different degrees of aggravation, God in his wisdom and justice may suit the degree of punishment exactly to the degree of every man's offences; and yet, by making any part of it eternal, may answer the infinite demerit of sin. According to the different aggravations of sin, God may deprive the sinner of some of his powers, and of all his comforts, and leave him only an existence in misery for a thousand years, or for ever: He may take away his bodily life, and leave

his spirit, according to its own immortal nature, to exist for ever in sorrow and anguish of mind, as a natural consequence of sin; he may deal with him as he pleases, and reassume as many of his gifts and blessings as he will, limiting the exercises of his own goodness, or his punishing justice, as his wisdom sees fit; and he may also punish him with a most painful sense of new-inflicted evil, as well as with the loss of all good. This seems to me to be the most natural notion that man could arrive at by the mere light of reason, *viz.* that sin against God forfeits all that man has received from God, and gives God, as a righteous Governor, a right to resume it all, or as much of it as he pleases; and perhaps this is what is eminently signified by the word *death*, which Scripture threatens as due to sin. See more in the marginal note, and Question XI. Section 1. This, therefore, I shall treat of more largely and particularly.

Proposition VI. But first, I would take notice of that remark, which Mr. Locke makes on the last verse of the first chapter of the *Epistle to the Romans*, where the apostle expresseth himself thus, concerning the wicked heathens, in our common reading, viz. *Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death.* But Mr. Locke endeavours to correct this reading by a direct contradiction of it, and that borrowed from one manuscript only, viz. *Who knowing* not *the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death;* that is, as he explains it, "they knew not that God had pronounced death to be the wages of sin."

I grant, indeed, the heathens knew it not to be a divine revelation; but their own reason could and might tell them, that if they had offended God, the original and sovereign giver of life, they had forfeited this life, and that God might deprive them of it, that is, put them to death; and as he had given them health as well as life, so he might lead them down to the grave by many and long sicknesses and sorrows, depriving them of health and ease.*

Here then is a very natural and evident account whence all the maladies, sufferings, miseries, and death that attend mankind may arise. Reason teaches us that they are all the natural or penal effects of sin, and of the anger of our Maker for sin: For man being a rational and intelligent creature, must come out of the hands of a God perfectly holy and perfectly good, in a state of innocence, virtue, health and peace; this the goodness of God seems to require: And, whatever pains or miseries attend him, cannot be the necessary consequences of his nature as a creature, because, as such, he must be made innocent and undeserving of pain; but it must be, therefore, the fruit of some voluntary choice of evil, or some early and universal offence against his Maker. How can we suppose that a just and merciful God would inflict on every man so much natural evil, or pain and death, where there was no moral evil to deserve it, no sin to procure it?

Proposition VII. Reason, or the light of nature, would further inform us, that since all mankind are sinners, and since God, the righteous Governor of the world, sees fit

* Here note, that as human life often includes not only existence, but all the blessings that attend it, and all possible enjoyments whatsoever, more especially such as are visible and sensible; so the word *death*, in the general notion of it, and in the most obvious and common sense of mankind, may reasonably include a loss of every thing which man possessed, that is, existence itself, together with all the blessings of it: And consequently when death was threatened for sin, it more obviously appeared to signify, that "by sin man forfeited every thing that he had received from his Maker." This, I say, might be the first and most obvious signification of the word *death*, when it was considered as reaching only to things visible, though afterwards its sense might be enlarged or limited, on particular occasions, as the invisible world came further into the notice of men.

to punish them for their sins, and not to deal with them as though they were innocent, the same righteous God, as I hinted before, would think it proper to punish greater iniquities with greater miseries, and to deal more gently with those whose sins were of a lesser kind; or that such who have some degrees of virtue found among them, or less degrees of guilt, should feel a lesser and easier punishment.

Proposition VIII. Now the common observation that every man makes of the affairs of this world may sufficiently inform him, that there is almost an infinite difference in the moral characters and practices of men, and in their deserts of punishment. It is plain as the sunbeams, that all men in the world may be divided into these three sorts of persons:

1. There are some persons of an abandoned and profligate character, whose whole life is a continued affront to their Maker; they have no regard to God as their Lord and Ruler, they are perpetually guilty not only of wilful neglects of God, but of vile impieties and blasphemies against him, as well as false or malicious, cruel or bloody practices against their fellow-creatures.

2. There are many others that have much less degrees of vice or impiety than the first sort, and seem to be led into sin, not from such impious principles as the former, and practise it no farther than the common gratifications of sense and appetite, ease and indulgence strongly allure them: They have several natural virtues, as temperance and good-humour, and compassion; they do some good and but little mischief in the world; so that if man were to be their judge, he would not know whether to pronounce them good or bad, or perhaps rather would justify them.

3. There are a few whose lives for the most part are filled up with outward practices of virtue with regard to themselves and their neighbours, as well as religion towards God, and there seems to be sincere love in their hearts towards God their Maker, as far as man can see; there are all the signs of true piety in them, though it is granted "there is no man innocent, not one of all mankind perfectly righteous, who doeth good and sinneth not." These three distinct characters plainly appear to every observer, *viz.* the very good, the very bad, and the indifferent, which we cannot certainly determine whether they be good or bad.

Proposition IX. The same common observation will also inform us, that there are no such actual distinctions in the providence and conduct of God as a Governor, made amongst mankind, by the comforts or sorrows which are allotted to them here in this world, as do in any measure answer to, or correspond with these three distinct moral characters of men according to their visible virtues or their vices.* Sometimes it falls out in the course of providence, that the best men, and those that have least of sin in them, are made very unhappy even till death, by many calamities or oppressions: And the worst of men abound in the comforts and pleasures of the present state, with very few uneasinesses: And we find among the middle sort of men, some a thousand times more unhappy than others. We sometimes see, that men are rendered more miserable in this life, even by their virtue, which will not suffer them to practise iniquity, in order

* Though I mention three characters of men here, I do not suppose there are three different states of men now, or will be hereafter, for all the indifferent are really good or bad, they do really love God, or they do not love him. But this life is a state of such disguise and darkness, that we mortals cannot judge who are inwardly good, and who are inwardly bad, among those who obtain the middle or mixed character, and therefore I call them indifferent.

to procure their pleasure or peace. The strictness of their piety exposes them to many persecutions from the wicked world. In short, in this world, all things come so much alike to all, that the love or hatred of God is not to be known by the course of his daily providences, as Solomon, and David his father, have both observed and complained, *Eccles.* ix. and *Psalm* lxxiii. if David wrote that psalm.

Proposition X. From this view of things, every considering person must infer, what some of the ancients did infer from the same view, *viz.* that the death of the body must not make an entire end of man, but that there will be a future state after death, wherein the righteous Governor of the world will call men to account for their behaviour here, and will manifest the wisdom and equity of his government, by rendering to every one according to their works; he is a God who knows the inward real characters of those whom we call indifferent, and sees all the alleviating or aggravating circumstances of every sin: And he will measure out the sorrows of evil and impenitent persons in a just proportion to their sins, and will make his final retributions exactly answerable to their present characters.

This argument assures us that sins, especially of greater aggravation, will be punished in a world to come, after the death of the body. And since the soul is in its own nature immortal, God, the great governor of the world, may punish sin by not seizing the forfeited soul into death, that is, by letting it live in anguish of conscience, or other inflicted pains from his own hand: For where every thing is forfeited, the governor may resume as much or as little as he pleases.

Proposition XI. Whether the great God, the governor of the world, will only continue the souls of men in their state of natural immortality after the death of the body, and judge and recompense them hereafter only in that separate state, according to their behaviour here; or whether he will raise their bodies up from the dead, that men may be treated according to their moral character, and recompensed hereafter both in body and soul, this inquiry cannot be resolved and determined by the light of nature. The mere reason of man can never prove certainly the doctrine of the resurrection, though it may look something probable that those spirits who have actually obeyed or sinned in their union with animal bodies, may be again united to bodies, which may become instruments of their recompence, whether of pleasure or punishment.

Proposition XII. And though, I think, it can never be fully proved by the light of nature, that an offended God will certainly forgive the sins of the best of men, so as to demand no punishment of them in the other world, and for this reason many of the ancient heathens thought there would be a state of penance or purgation, even for men of moderate virtue, yet it may be certainly concluded, that from the equity and holiness of God, the punishment of the wicked and profligate among mankind, shall be vastly greater than the punishment of those who had much more virtue, and better sentiments and practices of piety. Nature teaches us to say, with Abraham, Gen. xviii. 25, *Shall the righteous be as the wicked? That be far from the Lord: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?* And therefore some of these heathens supposed the souls of these very vicious persons after death to be sent into sharper torments, and that for a longer duration, if not for all the length of their natural immortality.

Proposition XIII. And I think it may be also inferred, with some probability, from the most abundant goodness of God, that if he does not entirely pardon the penitent, and if there be any punishments necessary in the other world, for more virtuous persons

by way of purgation, because even the best have sinned, not only these punishments shall be much lighter than the miseries of those vicious creatures who have lived a long life of constant impiety; but it seems probable also from the same infinite goodness, that there will be some reward for those that have sincerely repented of their sins, in the faith or hope of his mercy, have asked forgiveness of their Maker, and have endeavoured to honour him, though with many imperfections, and to serve their fellow-creatures from a right principle of love to God, and love to man, if any such shall be found among mankind. But this leads directly to the next question.

QUESTION X.

WHAT CAN THE REASON OF MAN, OR THE LIGHT OF NATURE, FIND OUT CONCERNING THE RECOVERY OF MAN TO THE FAVOUR OF GOD? OR, WHAT HOPE OF PARDON AND HAPPINESS CAN SINFUL MANKIND EVER OBTAIN BY THE MERE EXERCISES OF THEIR OWN REASON?

Answer. Human reason, exercising itself on this subject, might probably fall into such a train of thoughts as this:

Proposition I. It is certain that a sinner's repentance of past crimes, and asking forgiveness for them, together with sincere promises of better obedience, are no satisfaction to a governor for the dishonour done to his law by any capital offence: Nor is it ever counted in human governments a compensation for the injury done by the criminal to the authority of the governor, or to the public welfare: And therefore the criminal among men must be punished by the law, to guard the honour of the government, and secure obedience to the law, and he must yield his life for his offence, notwithstanding all his repentings. Nor is the governor thought too severe or cruel who requires it, nor is his goodness blemished by it. And in the same way of reasoning, we may suppose that repentance, and asking forgiveness, and better obedience for time to come, are by no means a satisfaction to the great God, the lawgiver and the governor of the world, for the injury done to his divine authority and his government by former sins: Nor can his goodness be justly reproached if he insist on the punishment of the offender. If lenity should always be practised, and sinners should come off always without punishment, there would be no sufficient guard and defence to maintain the authority of the lawgiver amongst his subjects, and to deter them from new offences.

I add further also, that it is not possible that any future virtues of a former offender, or any future instances of obedience, can make atonement to God, and give a recompence to him for past iniquities, or repair the honours of the broken law; because the creature owes his highest and best services to God his Maker, according to the law of creation, and he can never do more than was his duty.

Proposition II. Yet when we consider God not only as a righteous Governor, that will vindicate his own honour and authority, but also as a God who is holy, and loves holiness in every degree, and is also the most beneficent and merciful Father of his miserable creatures, we may reasonably suppose he will encourage and reward every little appearance of goodness that he sees amongst them, where he can do it with a salvo to his honour and government. And when we further observe, there will be wicked

creatures in abundance for him to make the objects of his vengeance, and to testify his severe displeasure against sin, and vindicate the honour of his broken law; surely we may suppose it very probable, by the light of nature, that where any person of the race of men does repent of sin, does return to his obedience to his Maker, and practise piety towards God, and single and social virtues, so far as he has any powers, opportunities, or advantages to find out and perform his duty; we may probably suppose, I say, and hope, that God will favourably pass by the transgression of such creatures; and especially when we consider, that the prevalence of corrupt nature sometimes is almost unavoidable in the present state of sin and temptation in which they were born, we may reasonably hope that the blessed God will put all these considerations into the balance, and will make gracious allowances for them: Upon this account we may have some reason to think, that virtuous and pious men, though their hearts or lives are blemished with some sins and frailties, will not go without some sort of reward. It is probable that God will make it appear in a future state, that his goodness has some regard even for imperfect virtue, in repenting sinners, as well as his justice demands its due honours in the punishment of criminals, who continue in their rebellion without remorse.

Proposition III. It might be added yet further, to enforce this consideration, that since God preserves mankind notwithstanding their daily offences, and affords them so many circumstances of ease and pleasure, giving them sun and rain, and food and delight in this world, together with the long forbearance of punishment; since he continues their natural powers, and the operations of the reason and conscience of men, dictating their duty to them, approving their good actions, and reproving them for their vices, in order to excite and encourage them to the practice of virtue; we may probably infer that he is now standing upon some terms of mercy with them, that they are upon their good behaviour, and are placed in a state of trial or probation, for future rewards or punishments, and that they are not utterly abandoned as condemned criminals, without hope, and merely waiting for the time of execution.

Proposition IV. From all these considerations, the light of nature may probably infer, that God has designed some way of salvation or recovery for poor sinful wretched mankind: And that if there be any such thing as an atonement necessary to answer for the sins or failings of virtuous persons, so that God may forgive them with more honour to his law, it is probable that God will provide this atonement for them, since it is impossible that the guilty creature, man, can find out or produce any such atonement for himself, he having forfeited all that he has by sin, and nothing that he can do can answer the present and future demands of obedience; much less can he make a recompence for a past disobedience.

Though reason is utterly at a loss to find out the secrets of divine government, and the methods that God has taken to honour his law and vindicate his authority by the sufferings of his Son Jesus Christ, which are revealed to us in the gospel, yet the reason of man may hope, that repenting sinners, and men who practise virtue and piety, so far as the light of nature can assist them, shall be made partakers of this mercy and this salvation, though they know not the particular methods whereby it is brought about; for if the continued forbearance and goodness of God invites and calls them to repentance, which St. Paul confesses, we hope it will also invite and incline him to forgive, where this goodness has attained its proper design on his creatures, and brought them to repent.

Proposition V. Reason also will give us this further information, that if God has provided any way or method of recovery for sinful and miserable man to his image and to his favour, he has taken effectual care that some part of mankind shall be certainly recovered and saved by it: And that he has not left it merely and utterly to the uncertain prospect of what the free-will of men would do toward their own recovery, under all the disadvantages of a tempting world without, and sinful appetites and passions within, lest all the provided methods of recovery be neglected, and none receive it and be saved. Surely the all-wise God would take care that such a glorious salvation should not be provided and proposed in vain.

Proposition VI. It is probable therefore that the grace or goodness of God, in conjunction with his wisdom, would or did fix upon some persons among degenerate mankind, to whom he resolved this way of salvation which he has provided should be effectual: And for this end, either did or would place them in circumstances of less temptation, or give them greater advantages for the improvement of their minds, and by proper providences would awaken their natural consciences, or set before them the differences of virtue and vice, with all their consequences in a future state, in a stronger light, and with more powerful conviction; and that all these persuasive methods might not miscarry, it is probable that he would give some divine touch to their spirits, if it were necessary, and would cause them to point toward himself and a future happiness.

Proposition VII. Nor is there just reason for any criminals to complain against the goodness of God, for effectually leading some of their fellows into a certain and secure method of salvation, since they sustain no injury thereby. Why should their "eye be evil," because God is good?

Let this matter be examined and scanned as far as it will by the powers of reason and present observation, and we shall find no such terrible consequences from the doctrine of God's choice, or appointment of particular persons to obtain this eternal salvation, as some learned men have imagined, provided that none of the rest are thereby prevented and hindered by any act of God.

Proposition VIII. Our eyes see plainly, and our constant observation of mankind assures us, that far the greatest part of them are not pious and holy, but sinful and rebellious against their Maker, and are wilfully running on in the paths of sin and madness, to condemnation and punishment; we must be convinced daily, that the bulk of mankind are by no means fit to be admitted into a heaven of happiness, which consists in the knowledge, love, and enjoyment of God; nor are they at all inclined to repent and return to God; but that they are rather rendering themselves daily fitter objects of divine displeasure; and, to all appearance, the greatest part of them are like to be punished in another world, for sins committed in this.

Now when the great and blessed God had provided a means of recovery sufficient for all these sinners, and yet foresaw them disinclined to accept of it, would it be unjust in him to resolve that some should certainly be recovered by it? Might he not, in consistence with equity and justice, form a decree that all these vicious and wretched creatures should not be utterly miserable? But that he would take certain and effectual care to save some of them from this madness and misery? When he had provided such a way of recovery as might secure the honours of his own government, might he not resolve to spare and save a considerable number of them? And in pursuit of this resolution, might he not set things necessary to their salvation in such a light before their

eyes, as that they should see their danger and their only hope, and be powerfully persuaded to repent of sin, and trust in the divine methods of mercy? Might he not thus engage and incline them to lead new lives, that their souls might be fit for happiness after death, in another state?

Would not such a conduct be a manifestation of great grace and favour in God to men, even though he did not extend this favour to all the race of mankind? What injury doth he do to the rest on whom he doth not bestow this favour? May he not, as a wise and righteous Governor, see fit to let many rebellious subjects go on in their own impenitence and folly, till they receive the just demerit, as well as necessary consequence, of their own rebellions? What possible reason of cavil can be raised against a sovereign Creator, Lord, and Benefactor, if he should act thus with his sinful creatures, since his goodness to some doth not in the least hinder others from obtaining the salvation which is offered to all?

Proposition IX. As for the rest of degenerate mankind, does not their actual continuance in their rebellion and sinfulness shew us, that though the way of salvation provided has a sufficiency in it to save them all, yet their salvation is not secured? But they are continued under many mercies, and the common operations of reason and conscience, with various degrees of advantage for virtue and piety, with hopeful encouragements to excite them to repent of sin and return to God, and very probable hopes of acceptance, if they sincerely repent of past sins, and practise the duties of love which they owe to God and man, and betake themselves to the free mercy of God, so far as it is revealed, and so far as reason and conscience can guide, and enable them in this imperfect state. And can our reason say, that the great God is bound to go further than this toward the recovery of sinful man?

Proposition X. These are some of the reasonings of the light of nature on this divine subject. It must be granted indeed, that if we had no assistances from revelation, the wisest and most thoughtful of men, by the mere light of nature, would hardly draw out their inferences to this degree of evidence and just hope: For if they could, why had not Socrates and Plato, those excellent philosophers, said the same things long ago? Are we so much better furnished with genius and the powers of reasoning than they were? Why should we be so vain and conceited of ourselves? It is certainly divine revelation and the advantage which we have from the word of God among us, that enables us to carry our reasonings to such a length.

Yet when we have many noble hints and lifts given us by the Bible, to spread these scenes and ideas before us, and to carry us into this train of consequences, we may then make it appear, that these propositions are either certainly or probably connected with each other, and that these consequences may be esteemed the result of fair and free reasoning on this subject.

Proposition XI. This might be illustrated by a plain and obvious similitude, or rather a comparison between the sciences of geometry and religion, as the one is assisted by Euclid, and the other by Moses and the other holy writers.

Euclid has drawn out his reasonings upon lines and circles, angles and numbers, into a noble set of propositions, in his books of geometry, and filled the world with most useful pieces of knowledge built upon undeniable demonstrations. Every man has the natural powers of reasoning as well as Euclid, and by the advantage of some acquaintance with his propositions and reasonings, or the works of some other great geometrician,

a multitude of men have made a rich progress in this science, and can draw up a scheme of geometry, in a chain of just consequences: But without these advantages there is not one man in ten thousand would carry on their reasonings half so far as Euclid has done, or find out one quarter of his propositions, or the arguments whereby he proves them. The same thing may be justly said concerning our drawing out doctrines and inferences upon the affairs of God and religion, by the light of nature, with the Bible in our hands, which not one man in ten thousand would be able to do, or at least would ever do in fact, without this advantage.

Proposition XII. Let us here stand still and recapitulate some of the things we have mentioned. Let us consider the present wretched degenerate state of all mankind, the giddiness and darkness of their understandings, the power of their prejudices, the vicious inclination of their hearts, the influence of evil examples round them, and the universal stream of impiety or idolatry, folly or vice, that has carried away all nations; let us consider how very poor and low, how wretched and ridiculous were the sentiments of men on divine subjects, and the affairs of religion in the days and nations of heathenism; let us reflect how wild are the notions, and how weak the reasonings of men, who are left entirely to the mere light of nature, or who have no revelation but such feeble glimpses and broken hints as they have derived down by long tradition, from the far distant heads of their families, Shem, Ham, or Japheth; let us think with ourselves how exceedingly few of the heathens, without some communications with the Jews, or some traditional hints of ancient revelation, have been ever led to repent of sin, to make supplication to the true God for forgiveness, to practise piety towards God, or virtue towards men, from a sincere design to honour and obey their Maker; let us consider the best schemes of religion and morality that were ever given by the heathen philosophers, and observe, how grossly defective they are, and how little they themselves or their disciples ever practised them. Again, let us think of the wisest and best of them, whose virtues made such a blaze in the heathen world, how universally they neglected the love of God, as the principle of their virtues, and the glory of God, as their end of them; for though *they knew God* by the light of nature, *they glorified him not as God;* Rom. i. 21. And let us further review the wretched character that the apostle Paul gives of the gentile world, in *Rom.* i. *Ephes.* ii. *Col.* i. &c. into what abominable iniquities they were plunged, even whole tribes and nations of men; and if we then reflect how well these accounts of St. Paul agree with the reports of modern travellers, I fear we shall find but exceeding few who can make any claim or pretence to the future rewarding grace of their Creator. And perhaps, upon a view of these matters of fact, the surest thing that reason can determine is this, that when all shall stand before the judgment-seat of God, the better sort of heathens can arise no higher in their utmost claims or pretences, than to be treated with some lighter punishments; and that the more impious and abominable wretches will be distinguished by more severe and durable inflictions of misery; for the very best cannot lay a just and sure claim to any reward. I will not dare to say this is the utmost favour God will shew them, but this seems to be the utmost certain claim or pretence to favour, which, by the light of nature, they can justly make for themselves.

QUESTION XI.

WHAT DOES SCRIPTURE REVEAL TO US CONCERNING THE PUNISHMENT DUE TO SIN? OR, WHAT ARE WE TO UNDERSTAND BY THAT DEATH WHICH THE SCRIPTURE TELLS US WAS THREATENED TO MAN, AS THE PENALTY DUE TO THE FIRST OFFENCE, OR AS IT IS INFLICTED ON MANKIND ON THE ACCOUNT OF SIN?

It is evident, from the second chapter of *Genesis*, and from many other places in Scripture, that *death* is the penalty threatened for the sin of man; Gen. ii. 17, *In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.* Now under this term *dying*, mentioned in the original law of innocency, many of our christian writers have generally supposed every thing to be included which has been ever since called *death*, in the Old and New Testament, *viz. natural death*, or the death of the body; *spiritual death*, or the loss of God's favour and image in the soul; and *eternal death*, or torment both of soul and body, in another world. Let us consider how far the word *death* ought reasonably to be extended to each of these:

1. *Natural death*, or *the death of the body*, is one thing plainly designed in the first threatening, beyond all controversy. The natural life of the sinner is forfeited to him who gave it, when he has once broken his allegiance to his Creator and supreme Lord. That this is the first and most obvious idea of the punishment threatened, may be plainly proved, because this is the universal, common, and literal meaning of the word death, in all human languages.

This is, also, the very sense of the same writer, Moses, when he uses the same words in all other parts of his writings, *viz. Thou shalt surely die;* or, *in dying thou shalt die.* In those places it means evidently temporal death, as might be proved easily if we consult all those places.

And let it be observed, that in those early ages, the future and invisible world being very little brought into view, the word *death* might naturally include in it the forfeiture of all being and all comforts whatsoever, since it evidently means the loss and forfeiture of all visible being, life, and comforts; for all these appear to vanish at death.

And this notion of death will not be strange, if we can agree to the learned and ingenious Mr. Warburton's sentiment in his *Divine Legation of Moses, viz.* that the "doctrine of a future state of rewards and punishments is not to be found in the Mosaic dispensation, nor did it make any part of it;" though I dare not so universally pronounce this opinion true.

Besides, this death of the body was positively foretold to Adam, and was the sentence pronounced upon him, when he had actually sinned: *Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return;* Gen. iii. 19. And accordingly we find, that when Adam is said to beget a son *in his own likeness*, that is, in his own mortal likeness, in contradistinction to the glorious and immortal likeness of God, in which, the foregoing verses tell us, he was first made, *Gen.* v. 1—3, then the Scripture goes on to prove it, by shewing how this death was executed: There is a plain account follows of the natural death of Adam,

and a long succession of the deaths of his posterity, as being made mortal in the image of Adam, their natural head.

And as I have shewn before, that not only life, but health and ease, and the comforts of life, being the free gifts of God our Creator, they are all forfeited by the offence of his creature against him: And all the pains, and sorrows, and sicknesses of this life, which by degrees tend to wear out nature, and to bring man down to the dust, may be justly supposed to be implied in his threatening of death.

And as this natural death of the body is plainly implied in the first threatening, as a penalty for sin, to come upon Adam and his posterity; so not only all the books of Moses, but perhaps all the Old Testament, do scarce afford us any instances, wherein the word *death*, properly and without a figure, is taken to signify any thing else plainly but the sorrows and miseries of this life, and the final deprivation of life itself; though, in the first threatening, tacitly, it may include the forfeiture of every thing God had before given, so far as God pleased to resume it. See note, Question IX. Section 6.

II. The next thing our divines have usually included in the word *dying*, is *spiritual death*, which has been generally extended to signify the anguish of a guilty conscience, the loss of the divine image in holiness, with the loss of the divine favour, and the infliction of new sorrows on the soul. Let us consider each of these apart, and see how far they may be included in the first threatening.

1. The anguish of conscience can never belong to any but the personal transgressor himself, because it consists in the uneasy and painful reflections of the mind of him that has sinned, charging himself with his own act of folly and disobedience. This is the natural effect, or consequent, of personal sin, and not so properly the threatened penalty of the law. This anguish does not come upon the offspring of Adam, by imputation, on the account of the first sin, for it can never be imputed to another person, by any representation or suretyship: Nor can it ever be conveyed or transmitted by any natural propagation or descent; for, in the nature of things, anguish of conscience can only belong to the very person who is conscious of his own actual folly and rebellion, which another person can never be conscious of.* But though this cannot be communicated to the offspring of Adam, on account of his sin; yet when they become personal sinners, they feel this anguish of conscience also arising from their own actual transgressions, as the natural consequence of a guilty mind.

2. The loss of the image of God in holiness is another thing contained in spiritual death; and in the New Testament this is termed, by St. Paul, a death *in trespasses and sins;* Eph. ii. 1. It consists in the corruption of human nature, and a bias or propensity toward evil. But this cannot be so properly threatened as the penalty of the law to be inflicted for the sin of Adam; for the holy and righteous God cannot be the author

* By the way, we may take notice here, that though infants have the sin of Adam so far imputed to them, as to fall under the sentence of death, and though the sins of the world were so far imputed to Christ, the second Adam, as to expose him to sufferings of soul and body, and to the accursed death; yet neither infants nor our blessed Lord ever had, nor can have, any anguish of conscience, because this arises only from the actual and personal sin, striking the mind of the actual and personal transgressor with sharp reflections and inward remorse, as conscious of his own fault. We may all be grieved and sorry that Adam our father sinned, but we cannot have painful inward remorse, reproaches, or self-reflections, on the account of the sin or sins which we ourselves never committed.

of sin in his creatures; he cannot infuse sin into the nature of man, nor take away his virtues by any divine act, or make him vicious.* This must therefore be only esteemed as a natural effect or consequent of man's first sin, as I have shewn under Questions III. and IX.

3. The soul's loss of the favour of God, is another part of spiritual death: The loss of the manifestations of God's love, or friendly converse with him, and any peculiar instances of his grace, may be included in the word *spiritual death;* 1 John iii. 14, *He that loveth not his brother, abideth in death:* And perhaps this may be also included in that scriptural expression, *Eph.* ii. 1—3, because they who are *dead in trespasses and sins* are said to be *children of wrath,* or obnoxious to the divine anger.

The words *indignation and wrath, &c.* in *Rom.* ii. 8, where the terms of the covenant of works are recited, seem to intimate that this may possibly be included in the word *death,* as a threatened part of the punishment, and reaches to the soul as well as the body, and that even after its separation from the body as well as before.

The favour of God was certainly forfeited in a legal manner, by the sin of the first man; this is a proper punishment for sin: For we cannot suppose that God, the righteous Governor of the world, will always treat a criminal as he does an innocent person; but will both threaten and manifest some tokens of his displeasure against him, in order to maintain his authority and government.

4. And not merely the punishment of loss, or the withdrawing of the sense of divine love, but the punishment of sense, as the schools call it, that is, actual pain, sorrow, signified by the words *tribulation and anguish,* may be impressed upon the soul by God himself, or by good or evil angels, as his ministers; and this is a proper legal penalty due to sin, and may be included in this spiritual death. In this sense the devil may be called "the angel of death," or *he who has the power of death,* Heb. ii. 14, as well as that he has power sometimes to kill the body. Under this head we may partly include the fear or dread of all these evils, or of any of them.

These four things then may be included in spiritual death; the two first of them as the natural consequences, or effects, of sin foretold, and the two last as proper punishments threatened: And the dread of them is partly a natural effect as well as a punishment.

Let us proceed now to the third distinction of death, as it is explained by our chief authors who treat on divine things.

III. *Eternal death* consists in the misery both of soul and body, in the invisible world, and in a future state: Thus it is generally explained by our writers, and has been often said to be included in the penalty due to the first sin. Let us here inquire into it.

First, Let us consider it as it relates to the soul of man. The soul is an immaterial and thinking being, it has in itself no natural principles of dissolution; and therefore, so far as we can judge, it must be immortal in its own nature: But who can say, whether the word *death* might not be fairly construed to extend to the utter destruction of the life of the soul as well as the body, if God the righteous governor should please to seize the forfeiture?† For man by sin had forfeited all that God had given him, that is, the life and existence of his soul, as well as his body: All is forfeited by sin into the

* See Question IX. Section 2. † See Note, page 128.

hands of God; and why might not the threatening declare the right that even a God of goodness had to resume all back again, and utterly destroy and annihilate his creatures for ever.*

There is not one place of Scripture, that occurs to me, where the word *death*, as it was first threatened in the law of innocency, necessarily signifies a certain miserable immortality of the soul, either to Adam, the actual sinner, or to his posterity. I say, I do not remember any such text, but will not positively assert there is none.

But suppose this *death* mean the utter destruction of soul, as well as of the body, to be a penalty due to every sin, for *the wages of sin is death;* Rom. vi. 23; even the least sin or offence against God; yet where the sin of man hath any degrees of aggravation, perhaps the divine justice would not destroy the soul, but would continue the soul in its natural immortality and consciousness after the death of the body, to sustain farther punishments, answerable to these aggravations: God may resume more or less of what man has forfeited by sin. And it is a point determined by our Saviour, that continuance in life and misery, is a greater punishment than annihilation; for, he says, "It is better never to have been born, than to be punished as Judas the traitor shall be punished;" *Matt.* xxvi. 24.

And since there is scarce any actual sin but what has some aggravations, either greater or less, perhaps there is no actual sinner, but has deserved some continuance of his soul in its existence, consciousness, and misery. And on this account the death threatened by the covenant of works, especially to the actual and personal transgressor, may perhaps include in it that *indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish*, which are due to every immortal soul that actually doth amiss, πᾶσαν ψυχὴν ἀνθρώπου κατεργαζομένου τὸ κακόν, *every soul that worketh evil;* Rom. ii. 8, 9. For, as I shewed before, the apostle seems to speak there of justification and condemnation by a law or covenant of works.

But whether the great God would have actually continued the soul of Adam, the first sinner, in a state of existence after death, and in a long immortality, to punish his actual offence, if he had not given him a new covenant, that is, a covenant of grace and salvation, this is not plainly revealed nor determined in Scripture. It is certain, that *the wages*, or due recompence, *of sin is death*, whether it mean an utter destruction of soul and body, or else bodily death, with a state of misery for the soul after the body is dead. The whole of our life, and being, and comfort, in soul and body, is forfeited by sin, and God may resume more or less, as his wisdom shall direct, in order to punish the guilty, according to the greater or less aggravations or demerits of their crimes.†

Secondly, The other part of eternal death, or eternal misery, consists in the raising

* It is granted that God, considered merely as a sovereign and as just, might resume all from his creature, though he be without sin; but we can hardly think a God of goodness would do it till sin had made a forfeiture.

† It is granted, that the first man standing under such a law and covenant as is before explained, hath by sin forfeited all that he had, both life and being, with all the blessings of it, for himself and his posterity, into the hands of his Maker, so far as the rectoral wisdom or justice of God please to resume them; yet it is justly doubted whether the great God would inflict any penalties beyond death, or any punishment in a future world, on those who have no personal sin, but lie only under the sentence of Adam's imputed sin. This will be debated in the Sixteenth Question.

the body up again from the dead, and rejoining it to the soul, in order to be made eternally miserable together with the soul, or rather to be an everlasting instrument of the soul's misery and torment. But that this resurrection of the body to a state of misery, is threatened in the Bible for the punishment of Adam's first sin, is what I cannot prove, nor do I know in what text of Scripture to find it. The law of innocency threatens death; but as the promise of life made to innocency was *immortality* and *eternal life*, without need of a resurrection, *Rom.* ii. 7, so the threatening of death to sin did not, that I can find, imply a resurrection. It was not said in *Gen.* ii. 17, "Thou shalt surely die, and shalt rise again to new sorrows."

There are several places of Scripture wherein the resurrection is rather attributed to Christ, and to his undertaking in a covenant of grace, besides that remarkable one, 1 Cor. xv. 21, *As by man came death, so by man came the resurrection of the dead;* but I know not of any one line in the word of God that provides a miserable resurrection as the punishment threatened to the offence of Adam. It is very probable therefore, that the resurrection of the body was introduced by Christ, the second Adam, upon another foot, namely, upon the gospel proposal of mercy to all mankind in the promise made to Adam after his fall, which has been usually called the first gospel, or an epitome of the gospel of Christ: And whosoever should refuse this grace, or abuse it by actual impenitence and indulgence of sin, should suffer punishment in soul and body for ever. This is called *the second death*, Rev. xxi. 8.

So that as the gospel or covenant of grace has provided hope and salvation by Jesus, the Mediator, for all that would accept of it, whether under the patriarchal, jewish, or christian dispensation; so those who continue impenitent, and will not return to God according to this new covenant, are exposed to double punishment under the government of the Mediator; and he will raise them from the dead to receive the reward of their obstinacy and impenitence, their violation of the law of God, and their neglect of all the means and hopes of grace.

QUESTION XII.

WHAT DOTH THE HOLY SCRIPTURE REVEAL CONCERNING THE RECOVERY OF MANKIND FROM THE SIN AND MISERY OF THAT ESTATE INTO WHICH THEY WERE BROUGHT BY THE DISOBEDIENCE OF ADAM? AND HOW FAR DOES THIS RECOVERY REACH BOTH WITH REGARD TO THE PERSONS RECOVERED, AND WITH REGARD TO THE DEGREES OF THEIR RECOVERY?

PERHAPS this great and important inquiry may be answered by the following propositions and reasonings:

Proposition I. Adam the first man having sinned against God, and brought such a dishonour on the law and authority of his Maker, and tainted his seed with sin, he has thereby exposed himself and his posterity, that is, the whole race of mankind to death: *But God, who is rich in mercy*, gave him a promise of a Redeemer, or Saviour, *Gen.* iii. 15, who should be "the seed of the woman," and should "break the head of the serpent;" that is, *destroy the works of the devil*, and deliver men from that mischief and misery into which sin had plunged them, through the temptation of the devil, who lay hid in the serpent.

Proposition II. "God's own and only begotten Son Jesus Christ, who before the world was with God, who was one with the Father, and was God," was himself appointed by the Father to become the Saviour of mankind, that all those might be recovered by pardoning grace to the favour of God, and raised at last to eternal life, who should repent of sin, and trust in the mercy of God, according to the several degrees of the discovery of it, which should be made in different nations and ages of the world, from the days of Adam to the days of Christianity.

Proposition III. For this end God appointed this his Son, at a certain period of time, to take "flesh and blood upon him, and to become a man, and to be born of a woman, that he might become the seed of the woman," according to his early promise made to fallen man; *Gen.* iii. 15.

Proposition IV. God ordained and sent his Son to preach this gospel of repentance, faith, and pardon, more clearly than ever before, and appointed him to obey his law perfectly, and to suffer the sorrows of life and death itself, instead of sinful man who broke his law, that by his perfect obedience and by his sharp sufferings, he might shew how greatly God hated sin, and might vindicate that honour of the law and majesty of God, which the sin of man had violated, and procure for men a discharge from those evils which he sustained, and obtain full salvation for sinful men. The great God, the Lord of heaven and earth, did not think it becoming his dignity and his majesty, to pass by such grievous offences, without some glorious and terrible demonstration of his own holiness, and his abhorrence of sin, even while he designed to save the sinners: His justice, that is, his rectoral wisdom, did not see it proper to exercise his mercy toward criminals, without some vindication of the wisdom and holiness of his broken law, some reparation of his honour, and some recompence to the authority of his government, which had been injured by our sins: Nor would he receive the offending creature into his favour without such a Mediator, as could not only plead for the offender, but could make atonement for his offence. It would be too tedious to enter into the proof of this atonement here. Many and sufficient defences of it are written, and the Epistles of St. Paul, Peter, and John, are so express in this doctrine, that one would think it needs no farther proof. This is set in a convincing light in two treatises, viz. *Of Jesus the Mediator;* and *The Redeemer and Sanctifier.*

Proposition V. Nor is it at all improper, or unbecoming the dignity or justice of God, or the state of man, that God should set up *one man*, even his *own Son*, to be *the second Adam*, or a head of life and salvation for multitudes, since it is evident that *one man*, or *the first Adam*, was the head or spring of sin, misery, and death to multitudes. Both under the covenant of works and under the covenant of grace,* the blessed God is pleased to transact his affairs with men, in and by a single person, who was appointed a head and representative of many thousands. And doubtless there were most important reasons for this conduct of God.

Proposition VI. But since this appointment of salvation by Jesus Christ, was the mere effect of God's free mercy and sovereign good-will, therefore, he was at liberty to appoint the exercise of his own grace, and the gift of this salvation to fallen man, in such

* I say, the covenant of grace does not abolish the law of works, in the general terms of it, *viz.* "He that sins shall die;" though indeed the particular prohibition of "eating of the tree of knowledge" grows useless entirely upon Adam's expulsion from the garden, and his everlasting absence from all the fruit there, which was no more in his power to eat.

ways and manners, under such limitations, with such terms or conditions, and in such degrees, as he pleased.

Now, to set this matter in the clearest light I can, I would shew what were the measures or limitations of this grace or salvation provided for fallen man.

1. This grace or salvation did not extend so far as to abolish or destroy the general terms, commands, or sanctions of the law of innocence, or the law of works, as it is called, under which Adam, the first man, was constituted. This general law is a law of nature and creation: It is founded in the very nature of things, and the relation between God and a creature, which requires all the creatures of God to yield perfect obedience to the whole will of their Maker, whether manifested by reason or revelation: And the penalty of this law abides still in force, in that it threatens the curse, or "death to every one that continues not in all things contained in this law," *Gal.* iii. 10; and "the judgment of God," or the δικαιωμα, the righteous sentence of the law, is, *That they which commit such things are worthy of death*, Rom, i. 32; *The wages*, or reward, *of sin is death*, Rom. vi. 23.

This death, in general, implies a forfeiture of life and being, and all the blessings of it, both in soul and body, as far as God is pleased to resume them, as I have shewn under Questions IX. and XI.

2. As the law, with its penalty, which threatens death to disobedience, is not abrogated, so the promise of eternal life to perfect obedience, which was superadded to the law, and turned it into a covenant, was not formally abrogated or abolished; though, indeed, it became unable to procure eternal life for any son or daughter of Adam, because they all were sinners: And there are some Scriptures which seem to shew that this promise and covenant stand still in force; Gal. iii. 12, *The man that doeth them shall live in them;* Rom. ii. 7, *To them who by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, honour, and immortality*, the law promises *eternal life;* Rom. viii. 3, *What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, &c.* Observe, it was not weak in itself to give life; the law still remained capable of giving life to any man who could produce and shew a perfect obedience to it: But *it is weak* only *through the flesh*, or the sinfulness of human nature, and our impotence to fulfil the conditions of it.

3. Neither did this grace and salvation of Christ extend so far as to provide an immediate and present release of fallen mankind, nor of any part of them, from all that sin and misery which the disobedience of Adam had introduced into the world. The very representation of those scenes of iniquity and mischief, sorrow and death, which attend all mankind, and which have been before exhibited, is a sufficient proof of the continuance and power of original sin all over the world, and the dreadful effects and punishments of it; and shews that mankind in general is not released from it, nor is any part of them immediately and totally delivered.

If therefore, some of our divines, when they have been expounding the fifth chapter to the Romans, have been heard to say, that the obedience, the atonement, and death of Christ have put an end to the effects of the sin of Adam, and brought in as extensive a blessing as Adam did a curse, they must not be supposed to mean that original sin, with all the sinful, painful, and mortal effects of it, in men, women, and children, is as entirely done away, as though they had never been, or as though Adam had not sinned:

For this is contrary to the witness of our senses, and the observation of our minds, every day of our lives.

4. Nor did this grace of God provide an absolute, certain, and effectual salvation for all mankind from the penalties and effects of the broken law of innocence, for it is evident enough that all men will not be saved. But lest this method of grace should be utterly ineffectual to all men, the blessed God, who saw the universal degeneracy and corrupt principles of mankind, would not leave it to such an uncertainty, whether any men should be finally saved or no. It was not fit so glorious a provision for our salvation should be left in so doubtful a manner. And it is highly reasonable to think, that God foresaw, no man would repent and accept of this grace, if they were all entirely left to their own choice and their own follies.

Therefore he resolved a number should effectually accept of it.

Now had it been possible that such a number could be secured in an indefinite manner, without appointing and naming every particular person, perhaps God might have left it in such an indefinite manner. But since that could not be done, therefore he saw it necessary to provide an effectual security for some certain and determined persons, which in Scripture are called "the sheep of Christ, whom he must bring into his fold, and they shall hear his voice; the children given him, his church, the elect of God, chosen before the foundation of the world; those who were given to Christ by the Father, those whose names were written in the Lamb's book of life; those which were predestinated or ordained to eternal life, who were redeemed from the earth, chosen to be holy," &c. *John* x. 11, 14, 16. *Rom.* viii. 33. *Ephes.* i. 4. *John* x. 29. *Rom.* viii. 30. *Heb.* ii. 14. *Acts* xiii. 48, and many other places, as *Rev.* xiv. 3, 4, and *chapter* v. 9.

And I cannot but make this observation in my reading of the New Testament, that though there are some Scriptures which seem favourable to both sides of the question about the "election of persons," yet the texts which support this doctrine are more in number, and more plain, and express, and unanswerable, than those others which may seem to oppose this particular election of persons unto faith, holiness, and salvation.*

5. And even these very persons, for whom salvation was thus certainly and effectually provided, were not to be rescued in this world from all the miseries of the fall, but only from some of them: They were secured first from those evils which were most dreadful, and delivered from others by degrees.

The effects of the fall or sin of man, under which these favourites, or *elect of God*, continue, are such as these, *viz.* God suffers them to come into the world with a sinful nature, uncured, unsanctified, and to continue under some evil operations and influences of this sinful nature all their lives, that they might conflict with it, and overcome it by his assistances: He appoints them also to continue during all this mortal life, subject to

* I desire the friendly reader to observe, that I am not here discussing the controversy about the proof of "particular election," &c. That has been done to much better purpose, and the doctrine itself effectually proved, by many considerable writers, such as Mr. Calvin, Archbishop Usher, Doctor Owen, Doctor Goodwin, and others, among whom I name Mr. Baxter himself. But I am only endeavouring to try whether I cannot represent a plain and defensible scheme, wherein this doctrine will sit easy on the minds of men, without straining or torturing any text of Scripture, and without pronouncing damnation on all the rest of mankind, by a certain and unavoidable sentence of death, for want of a Saviour.

If it be inquired, why the all-wise and blessed God should suffer mankind to revolt from him at first by an universal apostacy; and why he should secure the recovery of so few out of all mankind from their state of sin and misery? There are some reasonable solutions given to this difficulty, by the writer of the *Strength and Weakness of Human Reason*, in the Fourth Conference.

many pains, afflictions, sorrows, miseries, for wise ends and purposes, in his economy of grace; and at last, that their bodies should die, and turn to dust, according to the original threatening of death.

The deliverance or salvation which God provided for them, was, that they should be restored to the favour and image of God again, and brought, at last, to eternal life and happiness in this manner, *viz.* that they should have a most lively sense or perception of their own guilt and misery, and of the hope of mercy, so far as to encourage their repentance for past sins, and their return to God by a new obedience: And so far as the gospel of Christ came within their notice, they should learn the saving methods of grace by Christ Jesus: And to this end, all these things should be set before their minds by divine impressions on their understanding, as well as by the word, this is called *enlightening their minds,* in the knowledge of their sin and misery, and of the way of salvation by Christ. And yet further, that they should have their sinful natures in some measure sanctified, or made holy here on earth by a great change wrought upon them by God's Holy Spirit, which is called *regeneration* or *being born again;* that they should be enabled by the Spirit of God to comply with all the proposals or necessary terms of this covenant of grace or salvation, which should be appointed them by God himself as governor of the world, or by Jesus Christ his Son, as his great vicegerent, and *Lord of all:* That their sins should be pardoned, both original and actual, so far as never to be shut out of the favour of God, and the promise of eternal life on the account of them: Yet that they should sustain such sorrows and sufferings in their way to eternal happiness, as might teach them the evil nature and the bitter fruits of sin, and by degrees wean them from it: That they should have many assistances, reliefs, and comforts, under the difficulties and trials, sorrows and miseries, which they should sustain in this life: That their souls should be received into a holy and peaceful state, in the presence of Christ in heaven, at the death of their bodies: And that their bodies should be *raised again at the last day,* and be rejoined to their souls, at which time they should be publicly acquitted, and acknowledged as the sons of God, and be freed from all the unhappy effects and penalties of the fall of Adam, and be thenceforth made for ever happy in the presence of God. It would be too tedious to cite all the Scriptures which prove this; for they are scattered up and down every where in the New Testament.

6. It seems also to be agreeable to the laws of nature and creation, that young children, or infants, who are utterly incapable of knowing either the laws of God, or the discoveries and proposals of his mercy, and of complying with either of them in their own persons, should be esteemed as a part of their parents, or as one with their parents, as to all the purposes of this dispensation of grace, and the blessings which flow from it; and therefore God is called, *the God of Abraham,* and *the God of his seed,* in their successive generations; *Gen.* xvii. 7, 8. Therefore the gentiles, when converted to God, are said to be *the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them;* Isaiah lxv. 23. I do not stand now to give any longer proof of this matter, which has been so much controverted; but only add, it is not at all strange that God should make his covenant of grace so favourable and extensive to those children of pious persons, who never live to be capable of knowing or transacting these sacred affairs for themselves, since he has evidently so constituted it, in a great measure, in the kingdom of nature, and in the kingdom of providence; for in these it is evident,

that children often inherit the gout or the stone, a healthy and robust constitution, or sickness and pain, poverty or riches, disgrace or honour, according to the condition and circumstances of their parents. And since it was so constituted in the law of innocency, or the covenant of works, whereby all the children of men should have been established in happiness, if Adam, their father, had continued in his obedience, and whereby all the posterity of Adam are now born in sin and misery, and involved in his fall, when he became a rebel against his Maker; why may we not reasonably suppose the mercy of God would extend as far as his justice? And why may not the happiness of the new covenant of grace be conveyed to the infant offspring of those who have accepted it, which die in their infancy, and can have no state of trial in their own persons?

7. Since the Son of God, Jesus Christ, was so very glorious a person in his own nature, one who was *with God*, and *was God*, one who had *all the fulness of the godhead dwelling in him bodily*, there was such an abounding merit in his perfect obedience to the law of God for four-and-thirty years together, his voluntary submission to so many sorrows and sufferings in his life, and afterwards his enduring death itself, which was the express penalty threatened for sin: I say, there was such a superabundant value and merit in these undertakings, arising from the dignity of his person and character, that these labours, and these sufferings, did not only procure absolute and certain salvation for *the elect*, according to the will and appointment of the Father, but they may justly be called sufficient in their own nature, to have obtained actual salvation for all mankind.

And though God did not think fit to appoint all mankind to be certainly and effectually saved thereby, yet this redundancy of the merit of Christ, this overflowing influence of his great undertaking, his obedience, and his death, might be actually appointed and accepted by God the Father to obtain the following benefits for men; and as far as common benefits reach, Christ may be said "to die for all;" or to "taste death for every man," in the language of Scripture;* 2 *Cor.* v. 14, 15. *Heb.* ii. 9.

I. We may suppose it is owing to the exuberant merits of Christ, that this earth continues to be the habitation for mankind, and that the lives of Adam and Eve were preserved some hundreds of years after the day in which they first sinned, since the express word of threatening consigned them over to death immediately, "*In the day* thou eatest thereof, thou shalt die;" *Gen.* ii. 17.

It is true, such a reprieve as this was necessary in order to the peopling of the world, and the propagation of mankind in their successive generations; for had Adam and Eve died in the day when they sinned, the human nature would have been at an end, and have perished from this earth for ever: But it is most probably owing to the

* Though there must be a very good sense in which Christ may be said to "die for all men," because Scripture uses this language, 2 *Cor.* v. 15, yet it does not follow that the doctrine of universal redemption is found there; I cannot find that Scripture once asserts, that "Christ redeemed all men," or "died to redeem them all." In the New Testament, however, the word αγοραζω, *to buy*, may possibly be used and applied in a large sense, yet εξαγόραζω, *to redeem*, or λυτροω, I think, is never applied particularly to any but the Israel of God, or to those who do, or shall, actually receive the gospel, and partake of the salvation of Christ, as the purchase of his blood: None but those are plainly and expressly said to be redeemed by Christ, in any text of the New Testament, that I can find. Ηγορασε, "he bought, or paid a sufficient price for those who fell into damnable errors and heresies;" 2 *Pet.* ii. 1; but it is never said, he redeemed them. He bought them as a part of those *all things*, whose dominion he obtained by his sufferings, *Phil.* ii. 9, 10, but not as *his own* people.

scheme of mercy, and the new covenant built upon the merit of Christ, that Adam and Eve were not destroyed that very day, and that God permitted a race of men to cover the face of the earth. So that every son and daughter of Adam, who is born into this world, is some proof that the extensive merit of the death of Christ reaches to them for some purposes.

II. It is owing to the superabundant merit of the obedience and sufferings of Christ, that the earth is appointed still and ordered to produce such a variety of supports and comforts for mankind in their successive generations, and that all the vegetable and animal powers on this earth are not universally blasted by the curse: All the blessings of nature and providence that spring up from the earth, that descend from the heavens, that are brought forth or dispersed by the sun, and the moon, and the clouds, that are enjoyed and tasted by the sons and daughters of men in this world, are probably derived from this fountain of the blood of Christ; and in this sense perhaps he may be said to taste death for every man.

And let it be observed, that these blessings reach to whole nations where we have but little reason to believe God has any chosen favourites, any of his own beloved children, any that are actually regenerated, adopted, and sanctified to himself by special grace. Yet, methinks, every thing round about us seems to speak, that God has not utterly and absolutely abandoned all mankind to certain and necessary guilt and misery, besides the few whom he has chosen and secured to be certain subjects of his Son's kingdom: Every divine monument and instance of bounty and blessing round about us, seems to teach us that God is upon terms of grace and reconciliation with all the rebel race of his creature, man.

III. That mankind have the common faculties of nature continued to them, is to be ascribed to the undertaking of Christ: That they have the use of their senses and their limbs in any measures of health, ease, vigour, and activity; for these were all forfeited by sin, and included in the word *death:* All this is owing probably to Christ. And that they have any exercise of reason, that they have any measures of wisdom or prudence amongst them in the conduct of their affairs, may be ascribed also to the same spring, and perhaps this was designed in that text, *John* i. 4, 9, wherein we are told that "the word was the light, and the life of men," and he was that *light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world.*

IV. That there are any sparks of natural virtue, any remains of benevolence, goodness, or compassion towards one another in the hearts of men, is probably the fruit of the mediation of Christ: That there are any social virtues among them, that there is any conscience of probity, equity, and justice, that mankind relieves and helps one another, that there is any such thing as government among men, and that all the sons and daughters of Adam, in all nations, are not mere savages, are not like wolves and bears to each other; and, in short, that this earth is not a mere wilderness, or a hell of mischief and misery, is owing to restraining grace, and the redundant merit of the sufferings and death of Christ; or at least it may probably be so, nor can we give a better account of it.

V. That all mankind have had a gospel revealed to them, or a covenant of grace proposed to their acceptance at first, in and by Adam their father, and conveyed by way of tradition to his posterity; surely this must be acknowledged to proceed from the generous undertaking of Christ. I speak here concerning those who are not

elected, as well as those who are; for it has been designedly manifested to those who refuse, as well as those who accept. It seems to me to be owing to the overflowing merit of Christ, that all mankind are not buried in the same gross and brutal ignorance of God, and of themselves, as the darkest and vilest corners of the world are.

It is owing probably to this spring, that all mankind ever had pardon, grace, and salvation proposed to them in the first promise made to Adam, in the covenant made to Noah, and in the gospel or hope of salvation, which he, who was *a preacher of righteousness*, doubtless communicated to his posterity, that is, to all the world.

It is owing to the same grace and purchase of Christ, that ever this promise should be again repeated to Abraham, and, in some sense, to all the nations of the earth by him; for in him "all the nations of the earth are blessed;" *Gen.* xxii. 18. It is an effect of the merit of Christ, that ever there should be so many further discoveries of grace to the jewish nation, even to the profane as well as to the pious among them, and that not only by Moses and the prophets, but by Christ himself; and that ever this gospel should be published to the nations of the world, in the brightest edition of it, by the apostles of Christ, and the glad tidings of salvation proclaimed to the heathens, who sat *in thick darkness*, and lay under the *shadow of death*, and even to those among them who never accepted it.

It is owing to this redundancy of merit in his death, that so many whole nations are called to repent, and to trust in the mercy of a God through a Saviour; even the non-elect, as well as those that are elected: And that, to this day, the gospel should be continued to the nations who have so many years and ages abused it; that the ministry of the word should call whole kingdoms to be reconciled to God by a Mediator, to trust in the merit of Christ, to receive Jesus, as their Saviour and their Lord, to accept of pardon of sin and eternal happiness, upon the terms which the gospel reveals.

VI. It is probably owing to the same undertaking of Christ, and the overflowing value of his righteousness and death, that there are so many means of grace and divine assistances, both outward and inward, afforded to whole nations where the gospel comes; that even those who are not elected, have so many awakening providences, so many peculiar opportunities of mercy, so many excellent sermons preached to them, so many suitable words spoken both from the law and the gospel, as it were to their own souls. It is surely from this mediation of Christ, that they have their consciences at any time impressed with divine things, and excited to reprove them for sin, and to seek after salvation; that they have so many common workings of the Holy Spirit and his blessed influences upon their hearts, to make them bethink themselves about their eternal concernments, to give them some knowledge of Christ the Saviour, and to stir them up to the duties of faith and repentance, and new obedience; and that they are not only exhorted outwardly by the word, but inwardly by some common and general operations of the Holy Spirit, to receive this salvation. Could all these blessings be really bestowed upon sinful men by the faithful and merciful God, if the original, and eternal, and only design of them were merely to render them so much the more heinously criminal, and the more extremely miserable, without any possibility of hope or recovery ever included in these blessings, or intimated by them?

VII. In the last place, it is owing to the most redundant merit of Christ our Lord, that such a conditional pardon and salvation, or such conditional propositions of peace

as the gospel expresses, were ever provided for them who were not elected; these are set forth in such general proposals and offers as we read in the Bible: *Whosoever believeth shall be saved: Whosoever will, let him come and take the water of life freely: Ho, every one that thirsteth, &c. Look unto me, and be saved, all ye ends of the earth, &c.* If there were no such blessing provided for them, so much as in a conditional manner, surely it could never be really, and actually, and expressly offered to them. Surely the righteous, the gracious, and the holy God does not tantalise his perishing and miserable creatures, nor send his gospel and his ministers to offer them a mere nullity instead of a benefit? Christ does not call them in his gospel to receive an empty nothing, when his words propose to them a solid blessing. He does not invite them to trust in a Saviour for something which this Saviour was never entrusted with to be bestowed upon them, even if they did repent; or to hope in him for a verbal salvation which has nothing real in it, that is, for a mere word or name without a meaning, or a promise without a blessing in it. But because this is a question of great importance, I shall treat it more distinctly.

QUESTION XIII.

HOW FAR HAS THE GLORIOUS UNDERTAKING OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST PROVIDED ANY HOPE OF SALVATION FOR THOSE WHO WERE NOT ETERNALLY CHOSEN, AND GIVEN INTO THE HANDS OF CHRIST, TO BE REDEEMED AND SAVED?

THE inquiry here is not, whether any of them who are not originally chosen of God, shall be finally saved? The event, though it be known to God, yet it is left to be determined by their own choice, or refusal of this salvation. God himself has put no effectual and insurmountable bar, or rather no bar at all, in their way, to prevent their acceptance of his grace. His choosing other persons who were fellow-sinners, to make them certain partakers of this grace, is no hinderance to those who were not chosen, from accepting the same. It is my opinion that there is such a thing as a general sufficiency of pardon, grace, and happiness, provided for all mankind by Jesus Christ: And it is left to their own natural powers, under common helps, to accept or refuse it. That there is such a conditional salvation, and such real offers of eternal life procured by the overflowing merit of Christ, I think may be proved by these following considerations:

Consideration I. It is very hard to vindicate the sincerity of the blessed God, or his Son, in their universal offers of grace and salvation to men, and their sending ministers with such messages and invitations to accept of mercy, if there be not such a conditional pardon and salvation provided for them.

It is granted that the ministers who are sent to preach this gospel, and offer this grace of salvation to the non-elect, may be very sincere in their ministry, for they know not whom God has chosen, and for whom he has provided this special grace; and therefore they offer it to all persons, according to their general commission, Mark xvi. 15, *Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature, &c.* But how can God, or Christ, be sincere in sending their ministers with this commission, to offer this grace to all men, if they know that God has never provided such grace or salvation for any but the elect, no, not so much as conditionally?

It is hard to suppose that the great God, who is truth itself, and sincere and faithful in all his dealings, should call upon dying men to trust in a Saviour for eternal life,

when this Saviour has not eternal life entrusted with him to give them, if they do repent: It is hard to conceive how the great Governor of the world can be sincere in inviting and requiring sinners who are on the brink of hell, to cast themselves upon an empty word of invitation, a mere shadow and appearance of support, if there be nothing real to bear them up from those deeps of destruction, nothing but mere words and empty invitations. Can we think that the righteous and holy God would encourage his ministers to call them to lean and rest the weight of their immortal concerns and happiness upon a gospel, a covenant of grace, a Mediator, and his merit and righteousness, &c. all which are a mere nothing with regard to them, a heap of empty names, an unsupporting void which cannot uphold them? When our blessed Redeemer charges the Jews with aggravated guilt for refusing his grace, can we suppose he had no such grace in his hand to offer them? Or when he as it were consigns them over to death, because, says he, *ye will not come unto me that ye may have life*, John v. 40, can we suppose he has no eternal life, not so much as a conditional grant of it, in his hands for them?

By the way, I cannot but take notice here, that in order to avoid these hard and absurd consequences of the calls of grace, and offers of salvation, where none is really provided, some persons choose rather roundly to assert, there are no calls of grace, no offers of pardon or salvation at all in the word of God, to any but the elect: And I think, of the two, it is the more defensible or consistent doctrine, though it seems to run counter to a great many plain Scriptures in the Old Testament and the New; for there are many texts wherein pardon and salvation are proposed to all sinners whatsoever, without any regard whether they are chosen of God or no: And it is the design and voice of the whole current of Scripture, to call sinners to repentance by promises of mercy, and to enforce that which Isaiah speaks, chapter lv. 6, 7, *Seek ye the Lord while he may be found: Call ye upon him while he is near: Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.* And what our Lord himself pronounces in his personal ministry has the same design, when he calls to all the sinners in Galilee, Repent and believe the gospel, for *I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance;* Mark ii. 17. And St. Peter and St. Paul, his two chief messengers, or apostles, call all the crucifiers of Christ in general, and the heathen nations, to "repent and be converted, that their sins might be blotted out," and to "believe in the name of the Lord Jesus, that they may be saved;" *Acts* iii. 19, and xiii. 38; and xvii. 30, he commands *all men every where to repent;* Rom. x. 11, 13. While our Saviour most expressly informs us, Matt. xxii. 14, that *many are called but few are chosen.* Yet, I think, we must cancel all these Scriptures, and deny all offers of grace and salvation made to sinners in general, if Christ procured and provided nothing for them; or we must grant that there is a conditional salvation provided for all mankind, in order to justify the sincerity of God and his Son in the public call and general invitation given to sinners to repent and accept of this salvation.

Consideration II. It is very hard to defend the sincerity of the Spirit of God, in awakening the consciences of these persons sometimes, who are not elected, and stirring them up to think of receiving the salvation of Christ upon the terms of the gospel, if there be no such salvation conditionally provided for them to receive: It is hard to suppose that God should send his own Spirit to excite the consciences of such sinners in any common degrees to any repentings for sin, even in the most legal sense,

and to bring them near to the kingdom of heaven in the beginnings of conviction and sorrow, if there was no pardon provided, in any sense, for those who are not chosen, whether they repent or no; or that the Spirit should give them any, even the weakest excitations to trust in the merit of a Saviour, if that merit has obtained no blessing for them, not so much as conditional.

Shall it be ever said, that God the Father, and his Son, and Spirit, have each done their parts to encourage and excite non-elect sinners to trust in the gospel for salvation, or the least grace, or salvation, in a conditional sense, provided for them to trust in, or to accept of?

Consideration III. It is equally difficult to vindicate the equity of God, as the judge of all men, in condemning unbelievers, and punishing them eternally, for not accepting the offers of pardon, if there was not so much as a conditional pardon provided for them; and for not resting on the merit of Christ, and receiving his salvation, when there was no such merit appointed for them to rest upon, nor any such salvation for them to receive. Surely it will appear in the day of judgment, that the final condemnation of sinners, and their eternal misery, was merely the fruit of their own negligence and disobedience to the voice of the gospel, and refusing the offered grace, and not to any real want of sufficient provision made for them by him who calls them to receive it. The language of Christ, in his ministry to sinners, is, "Come to this feast of the gospel, for all things are ready;" *Matt.* xxii. 4. "This is the condemnation, that when light came into the world, they loved darkness rather than light;" *John* iii. 18, 19. Men are expressly condemned "because they would not believe in Christ, nor come unto him that they might have life;" *chapter* v. 40; and therefore "they die in their sins," as the apostle John often represents, *chapter* viii. 21, 24. Surely the Lord Jesus would never be sent "in flaming fire to render vengeance on them that obey not the gospel," 2 *Thess.* i. 8, 9, in the commands of it, nor receive this salvation, if there was no sufficient salvation provided in that gospel which commands them to receive it.

It will render this consideration much more forcible, when we observe, that there is a much severer condemnation, and more dreadful punishment, threatened to those who have heard of this grace and never laid hold of it, in proportion to the degree of light in which this grace was set before them. It is said, "It shall be less tolerable for the cities which refused to receive the gospel that Christ preached, than for Sodom and Gomorrah, in the day of judgment;" *Matt.* xi. 22, 24; and "they that despise the gospel of Christ, of how much sorer punishment suppose ye, shall they be thought worthy, than those who despised the law of Moses? *Heb.* x. 28, 29. So that their enjoying the proposals of this grace, and this gospel, makes their case much worse than if they had never enjoyed it; and can we think that the righteous Judge of the world will merely send words of grace and salvation amongst them, on purpose to make his creatures so much the more miserable, when there is no real grace, or salvation, contained in those words for them who refuse to receive it? It is very hard indeed to vindicate the righteousness of the sentence of their double condemnation and punishment, for the refusal of pardon and salvation, if there was not so much as a conditional pardon, and a conditional salvation, provided for them.

Consideration IV. It is very hard to suppose, that when the word of God, by the general commands, promises, threatenings, given to all men whatsoever, and often

repeated therein, represents mankind as in a state of probation,* and in the way towards eternal rewards or eternal punishments, according to their behaviour in this life: I say, it is hard to suppose all this should be no real and just representation, but a mere amusement: That all these proposals of mercy, and displays of the gracious dealings of God, should be an empty show, with regard to all the millions of mankind, besides the few that are chosen to happiness; and that they should really be so fixed in a wretched, hopeless, and deplorable state, under the first sin of the first man, that they are utterly irrecoverable from the ruins of it; and that even as unalterably so as devils are, without any hope of recovery from their state of guilt and misery, for whom there was no Saviour provided, and whom God has not treated in this way of precept, promise, and threatening. Is there not a plain difference made in Scripture, between "the angels who sinned, whom God spared not, but cast them down from heaven into chains of darkness," and mankind who sinned, to whom God gives time and space for repentance, means of grace, offers of pardon, conditional promises of salvation, with a command to all men to accept it? What can manifest the blessed God to be upon terms of mercy with them, if this does not?

Consideration V. This seems to be a fair and easy way to answer several of those texts of Scripture, which represent God as *the Saviour of all men, especially of them who believe;* 1 Tim. iv. 10; and assert, that God calls and commands *all men every where to repent;* Acts xvii. 30; that Christ tasted *death for every man;* Heb. ii. 9; that he *gave himself a ransom for all* men, *to be testified in due time;* 1 Tim. ii. 6; that *he died for all;* 2 Cor. v. 15; that he gave himself to be the propitiation *for the sins of the whole world;* 1 John ii. 2; and *the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world;* chapter iv. 14; and that *God so loved the world* of mankind, *that he sent his Son, not to condemn the world, but that through him the world might be saved;* and that *whosoever believes in* his Son Jesus, *should not perish, but should have eternal life;* John iii. 16, 17.

I grant indeed, that many of these Scriptures may have a pretty sufficient answer given to them by the art of criticism, even upon the supposition that salvation is provided only for the elect; but there are some few of those Scriptures, and of their parallel places, which can never be so well explained, but by supposing the death of Christ has such an all-sufficient and overflowing merit in it, as to provide a sufficient conditional pardon, and conditional salvation, for the non-elect, while it also provides absolute, effectual, and certain pardon and salvation for those whom God has elected.

It seems evident to me from several texts of the word of God, that Christ did not die with an equal design for all men; but that there is a special number whom the Father chose and gave to the Son, whose salvation is absolutely secured by the death

* I know it has been the opinion of some persons, that this life is not properly called a state of probation, or trial of men for eternity, because the final event is not uncertain, since it is known to God already, and partly determined by him: And yet these very persons will say, that a season of affliction, or temptation, is a season of trial to the people of God; for so it is often called in Scripture; 2 *Cor.* viii. 2. *Heb.* xi. 36, and 1 *Pet.* iv. 12, and 1 *Pet.* i. 7, it is called, "the trial of our faith," &c. Now I would fain know, whether the event of every season of trial of every kind of men, whether of saints or sinners be not known to God? And in this sense it is not uncertain; and yet Scripture, with much propriety, calls the one a season of trial: And I see no reason to exclude the other from the same name, especially since the sacred writers use it for wicked men also. Rev. iii. 10, *I will keep thee from the hour of temptation,* or trial, *which shall come upon all the world, to try them which dwell upon the earth.*

and intercession of Christ; *John* xvii. 6, 9, 10. But why should this hinder our interpretation of some other texts in a more general and catholic sense, where the love of God and Christ to mankind, are expressed in more universal phrases and terms? Why should we affect to limit that grace which is expressed in an unlimited form of speech? Why may we not suppose conditional pardon and conditional salvation, and the offers of the gospel, and the means of grace, which are necessary to it, to be the purchase of the death of Christ, since the death of so glorious a person has such an exuberant value in it, and such all-sufficient merit; and especially since it is allowed to superabound so far as to purchase the continuance of the world, and common blessings of life for mankind.

Here let it be observed, that when the remonstrants assert, that Christ died for all mankind, merely to purchase conditional salvation for them, and when those* who profess to be the strictest calvinists assert Christ died only and merely to procure absolute and effectual pardon and salvation for the elect; it is not because the whole Scripture every where expressly or plainly reveals, or asserts, the particular sentiments of either of these sects, with an exclusion of the other; but the reason of these different assertions of men is this, that the holy writers, in different texts, pursuing different subjects, and speaking to different persons, sometimes seem to favour each of these two opinions,† and men being at a loss to reconcile them by any medium, run into different extremes, and entirely follow one of these tracks of thought, and neglect the other.

But surely, if there can be a way found to reconcile these two doctrines of the absolute salvation of the elect, by the obedience, righteousness, and death of Christ, procuring it for them, with all things necessary to the possession of it, and also of the conditional salvation provided for all mankind, and offered to them in the gospel, through the all-sufficient and overflowing value of the obedience and sufferings of Christ; this will be the most fair, natural, and easy way of reconciling these different texts of Scripture, without any strain or torture put upon any of them.

Nor indeed can I conceive why the remonstrant should be uneasy to have pardon and salvation absolutely provided for the elect, since all the rest of mankind, especially such as hear the gospel, have the same conditional salvation which they contend for, sincerely proposed to their acceptance; nor can I see any reason, why the strictest calvinist should be angry, that the all-sufficient merit of Christ should overflow so far in its influence, as to provide conditional salvation for all mankind, since the elect of God have that certain and absolute salvation, which they contend for, secured to them by the same merit; and especially since that great and admirable reformer, John Calvin, whose name they affect to wear, and to whose authority they pay so great a regard, has so plainly declared in his writings, that there is a sense in which Christ

* I say, those who profess to be the strictest calvinists; not that they do really come nearest to Calvin's sentiments and language; for Calvin himself has frequently intimated, in his *Comments on Scripture*, that Christ did in some sense die for all men. See the end of this Fifth Consideration.

† This is a most evident truth, that Scripture, in different parts of it, seems by its expressions to favour each of these opinions; otherwise it could never be, that the writers of the different parties should each of them bring so many texts to support and vindicate their own sentiments, and which plainly give so much difficulty and perplexity to the writers of the opposite side to answer them.

died for the sins of the whole world, or all mankind; and he sometimes goes so far as to call this the redemption of all. See his comments on the following Scriptures.*

Matt. xxvi. 28, *This is my blood of the New Testament, which was shed for many for the remission of sins.* "Sub multorum nomine non partem mundi tantum designat, sed totum humanum genus." Under the name of many, he signifies not a part of the world only, but all mankind.

Rom. v. 18, *As by the offence of one, judgment came upon all to condemnation, so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men to justification of life.* "Communem omnium gratiam facit quia omnibus exposita est, non quod ad omnes extendatur re ipsâ: Nam et si passus est Christus pro peccatis totius mundi, atque omnibus indifferenter Dei benignitate offertur, non tamen omnes apprehendunt." He makes this grace common to all, because it is set before all, though not really and in fact, reached out to all. For though Christ suffered for the sins of the whole world, and he is offered indifferently to all by the bounty of God, yet all do not receive him.

1 Cor. viii. 11, 12, *Through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died?* On which Calvin remarks thus: "If the soul of every weak person was the purchase of the blood of Christ, he that for the sake of a little meat, plunges his brother again into death, who was redeemed by Christ, shews at how mean a rate he esteems the blood of Christ."

1 John ii. 2, *He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for our's only, but also for the sins of the whole world.* "Hic movetur quæstio, quomodo mundi totius peccata expientur?—aliqui dixerunt—Sufficienter pro toto mundo passum esse Christum, sed pro electis tantum efficaciter. Vulgo hæc solutio in scholis obtenuit: Ego quanquam verum esse illud dictum fateor, nego tamen præsenti loco quadrare." Here a question is raised, How can the sins of the whole world be expiated? Some have said Christ suffered sufficiently for the whole world, but effectually for the elect alone. This is the common solution of the schools: And though I confess this is a truth, yet I do not think it agrees to this place.

2 Pet. ii. 1, *There shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.* "Tamtesi variis modis abnegatur Christus, eum tamen hîc, meo judicio, attingit Petrus, qui exprimitur apud Judam: Nempe, dum gratia Dei in lasciviam convertitur. Redemit enim nos Christus, ut populum haberet segregatum ab omnibus mundi inquinamentis, addictum sanctitati et innocentiæ. Qui igitur excusso fræno, in omnem licentiam se projiciunt, non immeritò dicuntur Christum abnegare, à quo redempti sunt." That is, though Christ is denied many ways, yet, in my opinion, Peter means the same thing here, which Jude expresses, *viz.* that the grace of God is turned into wantonness: For Christ hath redeemed us, that he might have a people free from all the defilements of the world, and devoted to holiness and innocence. Whosoever, therefore, shake off the yoke, and throw themselves into all licentiousness, are justly said to deny Christ, by whom they were redeemed.

* It may be proper to observe here, that some of the most rigid and narrow limitations of grace to men are found chiefly in his *Institutions*, which were written in his youth. But his *Comments on Scripture* were the labours of his riper years and maturer judgment.

Jude verse 4, *Turning the grace of our God into wantonness, and denying the only Lord God, and Jesus Christ our Lord.* "Christum verò abnegari intelligit, quum hi qui sanguine illius redempti fuerant, diabolo se rursus mancipantes, incomparabile illud pretium quantum in se irritum faciunt." The apostle here means that Christ is denied, when those who were redeemed with his blood, again enslave themselves to the devil, and, as far as in them lies, make that incomparable price vain and ineffectual.

Thus it appears that Calvin himself thought that Christ and his salvation are offered to all, and that in some sense he died for all.

But I proceed to the last consideration.

Consideration VI. That all mankind have some conditional salvation provided for them, and some real grace and pardon offered to them, by a new covenant, appears from this, that all men, both wicked and righteous, or "just and unjust, shall be raised from the dead, to give an account of things done in the body, whether good or evil," and to receive rewards or punishments in their body, as well as in their souls, according to their improvement or misimprovement of the dispensations under which they have lived. This seems to be the sense of several Scriptures; *John* v. 28, 29. 2 *Cor.* v. 10. Now a resurrection is by no means provided by the law of innocency, or the covenant of works: That only threatens death for sin, without the least hint, or thought, of the body's rising again. This doctrine of the resurrection, therefore, seems to be the effect of the overflowing merit of Christ, and perhaps that expression of the apostle may have some reference to it, 1 Cor. xv. 21, 22, *Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead; for as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive;* though I confess it may be also construed and confined only to the resurrection of the saints. But it is evident that Jesus Christ has this power to raise the dead, even sinners as well as saints, and "authority to judge all the world, given him of the Father, as a Mediator," or *because he is the son of Man.—And all that are in the graves—shall come forth; they that have done good to the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil to the resurrection of damnation;* John v. 25—29. They who have believed in Christ, and obeyed him, shall be raised up at last to happiness; but those who have disobeyed the gospel shall be raised in order to be *punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord;* 2 Thess. i. 9.

Now surely this resurrection of all mankind must be built upon the foot of a new covenant given or offered to all mankind, since the old covenant of innocency, or the law of works, appoints eternal life without dying for the obedient, and death without a resurrection for the disobedient. Such a covenant therefore as admits natural death to seize even upon those who are obedient to it, and provides a resurrection even for those who are disobedient, must needs be a different covenant from the law of works, which admits no death for the one, nor provides any resurrection for the other.

There was therefore doubtless a general proclamation of pardon and salvation to all mankind, who were fallen in Adam, contained in the first promise, or the gospel that was preached to Adam, the first father of mankind, by God himself, in the garden after his fall: And this was again preached to all the world by Noah, the second father of mankind, and a preacher of righteousness; otherwise I think the resurrection would not reach to every man and woman in the world.

Let it be considered also, that this very resurrection of the bodies of sinful mankind,

brings with it an additional penalty and misery, beyond what the law of innocency threatened, even the everlasting punishment of the new-raised body, and the soul as united to it: Now this cannot, with such evident justice, be inflicted upon the non-elect, if they are under no other covenant but that of innocency, or the law of works, because no such punishment is threatened or implied in that law, as far as I can read it.

Nor would there have been any such thing as sinners arising from the dead, that we can find in the Bible, if Christ Jesus had not taken upon him to be a Mediator between God and fallen man, so far as to set mankind upon some new foot of hope; and thus unbelievers and impenitent persons are punished in their new-raised bodies, for rejecting this hope. For since the broken law or covenant of works leaves the body under the power of death for ever, we can hardly suppose that the Son of God, the chief minister of his Father's grace, would provide a resurrection of the body for breakers of that original law, merely to put them to severer punishments and more intense torments, than that broken law threatened, if there were not some advantage in the nature of things, derived to them from his mediation to balance it: Now what equal advantage is there to balance this severer punishment, if there be not some conditional hope of their recovery from the misery of their fallen state, upon supposition that they sincerely endeavour to perform all the duties of this new covenant, as far as the revelation of them comes within their notice; that is, that they repent of their sins, and trust in the divine grace and forgiveness, in order to their acceptance.

Our Lord Jesus Christ, the righteous and appointed Judge, will never give occasion for any of all the miserable multitude to say, that they are condemned to an endless punishment in their new-raised bodies, for breaking God's original law of innocency, which punishment was never threatened in that law. He will never give them reason to complain, that, with regard to them, he came not to be a Mediator or a Saviour, but merely to add to their misery, by a resurrection to eternal pain, without any equivalent of hope: Or that he came to expose them to double damnation for refusing his grace, when he had none for them to accept. The goodness and equity of God, and his Son, will never suffer such an imputation to fall upon any part of their transactions: And as they have both agreed in pronouncing these words, John iii. 17, *God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved;** they will both agree also in such a conduct, as shall not so much as appear to run counter to such a solemn expression of grace, or to the common notions and rules of justice.

Since therefore it appears pretty evident, that Jesus, the righteous Judge, will not condemn sinners for refusing that grace and that salvation, which had no reality in things, and which was never really offered to their acceptance, nor so much as provided; and since he will never punish sinners by the mere law or covenant of works, with the punishment of a resurrection of the body, which were never threatened nor included in that law or covenant; we must conclude, according to the representation of Scripture, according to the rules of justice, and the reason of things, that there must be some other covenant, some covenant of grace and salvation, under which all men are situated,

* If the word *world* in the two or three first places, signifies *mankind*, without distinction, why should *the world*, in the last place, signify only *the elect?* Is not a conditional or indefinite salvation here intimated to be provided for mankind, whether they be Jews or gentiles?

and which has really been offered to all mankind, either in clearer or in more obscure notices thereof; such a covenant, whereby the resurrection of the body to eternal happiness, is the appointed reward of those who receive this offered salvation; and whereby the resurrection of the body to eternal misery, is the appointed punishment of those who refuse to comply with the grace of that dispensation under which they are placed, and neglect to receive this salvation.

Thus I think I have proved it pretty clearly, at least to my own satisfaction, that the non-elect among men are not predestinated to eternal misery by any absolute act of reprobation, nor are they left in the state of fallen angels or devils, for whom there is no Saviour appointed, and who cannot have any reasonable hope; but that there is a conditional salvation provided for all men, and offered to them in the gospel, by the glorious all-sufficiency and redundance of the merit of Christ.

The doctrine of reprobation, in the most severe and absolute sense of it, stands in such a direct contradiction to all our notions of kindness and love to others, in which the blessed God is set forth as our example, that our reason cannot tell how to receive it. Yet, if it were never so true, and never so plainly revealed in Scripture, it would only be a doctrine which might require our humble assent, and our silent submission to it, with awful reverence of the majesty and sovereignty of the great God. But it is by no means a doctrine in which we, as men, could or should rejoice and glory, or take pleasure in it; because it hath so dreadful an aspect on far the greatest part of our fellow-creatures, considered as mere creatures. Nor do I think the blessed God would require us so far to divest ourselves of humanity, as to take a secret satisfaction in the absolute and eternal appointment of such numbers of our kindred in flesh and blood, to everlasting perdition: Much less should we make this awful and terrible article a matter of our public boast and triumph, even if we could prove it to be revealed, but rather mourn for it.

And since there are so many expressions of Scripture, that give us reason to think that Christ lived and died in some respects as a common Mediator of mankind, though with a peculiar regard to the elect, methinks this doctrine of the extensive goodness of God is a much more desirable opinion, and should be more cheerfully received by us, as it is so agreeable to our duty of charity to all men, and seems so necessary to us at present, for vindicating the justice, goodness, and sincerity of the blessed God, in his transactions with mankind.

When therefore I hear men talk of the doctrine of reprobation, with a special gust and relish, as a favourite article, I cannot but suspect their good temper, and question whether they "love their neighbour as they do themselves?" The case is very different, when saints are called in Scripture to rejoice in the public judgments of God, exercised upon the antichristian state, or upon the wicked oppressors, and incorrigible sinners of the world: For that is the effect of God's equity and righteousness, as a wise and faithful Governor; but this would be an instance merely of his dreadful sovereignty and terror, and hardly consistent with goodness.

I would ask leave also in this place to inquire, what great advantages can be derived to religion or Christianity, by endeavouring to limit the extent of the death of Christ, and to take away all manner of hopes, and prayers, and endeavours, from the non-elect? Does the doctrine of election of persons obtain any further confirmation by it? No, by no means. Their salvation is secured, whatsoever becomes of the rest of mankind,

whether they have any hopes or no. Does the goodness and special grace of God acquire any further honours by this limitation? No certainly. Divine grace is perfectly the same towards the elect, as though there were no other person in the world. Are the elect any way encouraged by it? Not in the least: But many persons who are awakened to a sense of sin, and are seeking after Christ for salvation, by this narrow doctrine may be terribly discouraged from receiving his offers of grace, when they are taught to doubt whether there be any grace provided for them, or whether Jesus be appointed to act as their Saviour. It may be a means to drive some poor souls to despair, when they hear that unless they are elected, they may seek after salvation by Christ in vain, for there is none purchased for them, not so much as conditionally: And it may tempt them to begin at the wrong end, and seek to pry into the counsels of God, and inquire after what they can never know, that is, their election of God, before they dare trust in grace, or submit to the gospel of Christ.

Now if many inconveniencies may arise from this limitation of the whole virtue of the blood of Christ only to the elect, and utterly secluding all the rest of mankind; and if no valuable end or advantage to religion can be obtained by this narrow opinion; what should make men so zealous to get the greatest part of the world excluded utterly from all hopes, and all salvation? I know there have been many objections raised against this charitable opinion of the extent of Christ's death, in books of controversy; but the two chief and most plausible are these, which I will endeavour chiefly to answer, and by these answers lead the way for solving the rest.

Objection I. But may it not be said here, if there be only an outward sufficiency of salvation provided for the non-elect, by a conditional pardon procured through the death of Christ if they should repent and believe, but no inward sufficiency of grace provided to enlighten their minds, to change their hearts, and enable them to exercise this faith and repentance, the event will be infallibly and necessarily the same, and their damnation as necessary and certain, as if there were no outward salvation provided; since they of themselves cannot repent, they cannot believe; for by the fall all men are become blind in spiritual things, and dead in sin.

Answer. It is granted, that no sinner will truly and sincerely repent and believe in Christ, without the powerful and effectual influences of converting grace; and therefore they are called blind and dead in sin, because God knows the final event will be the same as if they were under a natural impossibility, or utter natural impotence. And for this reason the conversion of a sinner is called, "a new creation;" being "born again;" "giving sight to the blind;" or, "a resurrection from the dead:" And the necessity of divine power to effect this change is held forth in many places of Scripture.

Yet we must say still, that sinners are not under such a real natural impossibility of repenting and believing, as though they were naturally blind or dead. It is true, the blind and the dead have lost their natural powers of seeing and moving; but when Scripture represents the inability of sinners to repent, or believe in Christ, by such figures and metaphors as death or blindness, it must be remembered these are but metaphors and figures, such as the holy writers and all the eastern nations frequently use; and they must not be understood in their literal powers or faculties of understanding, will, and affections, which are the only natural powers necessary to believe and repent.

Now it is plain that these natural faculties, powers, or capacities, are not lost by the

fall; for if they were, there would be no manner of need or use of any moral means or motives, such as commands, threatenings, promises, exhortations; these would all be impertinent and absurd, for they could have no more influence on sinners, than if we command or exhort a blind person to see, or a dead body to rise or move; which commands and exhortations would appear ridiculous and useless. And since the blessed God, in his word, uses these moral means and motives to call sinners to repentance and faith, it is certain that they have natural powers and faculties sufficient to understand and practise these duties; and therefore they are not under a necessity of sinning, and of being destroyed, since there is nothing more wanted in a way of sufficient natural powers, faculties, or abilities, than what they have.

All the other impotence and inability therefore to sinners to repent or believe, properly speaking, is but moral, or seated chiefly in their wills. It is a great disinclination or aversion in these natural faculties, to attend to, learn, or practise the things of God and religion;* and this holds them fast in their sinful state, in a similar way as if they were blind and dead, and I said the final event will be the same, that is, they will never repent without almighty grace. And upon this account that strong and settled inclination to sin, and aversion to God, which is in the will or affections, is represented in our own language, as well as in the eastern countries, by impotence or inability to forsake or subdue sin: As when a drunkard shall say, "I had such a strong desire to the liquor, that I could not but drink to excess, I could not withhold the cup from my mouth:" Or when a murderer shall say, "I hated my neighbour so much, that having a fair opportunity, I could not help killing him:" Or when we say to a man of fury in his passion, "You are so warm at present, that you cannot see things in a true light, you cannot hearken to reason, you cannot judge aright, you are not capable of acting regularly." And that this is the manner of speaking in the eastern countries, is evident from the Bible; *Gen.* xxxvii. 4, Joseph's brethren *hated him, and could not speak peaceably to him:* Yet you will grant all this is but moral impotence, that is, a very strong inclination to excess of drink, or murder, or passion, or a strong aversion to the contrary virtues. Even in the things of common life the *cannot* sometimes signifies nothing but the *will not*; Luke xi. 7, *Trouble me not, the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I* CANNOT *rise and give thee;* that is, I WILL NOT. And with regard to faith, or believing in Christ, our Saviour explains his own language in this manner. In one place he saith, *No man can come unto me except my Father draw him;* John vi. 44. And in another place he charges the Jews with this as their fault: *Ye will not come unto me, that ye may have life;* John v. 40. So in the parable one excuse is, Luke xiv. 20, *I have married a wife, and—I cannot come.* All these citations intend the same thing: Their *cannot* is their *will not*, that is, it is the strength of their aversion to Christ, which is a moral impotence or inability to believe in him, and the fault lies in the will.

St. Paul speaks to the same purpose, *Rom.* viii. 7, 8, where he shews, that it is the

* I grant this inability to repent has been sometimes called by our divines a *natural impotence*, because it arises from the original corruption of our nature since the fall of Adam; and in this sense I fully believe it. But this spring of it is much better signified and expressed by the name of *native impotence*, to shew that it comes from our birth; and the quality of this impotence is best called *moral*, being seated chiefly in the will and affections, and not in any want of natural powers or faculties to perform what God requires: And the reason is plain, *viz.* that no new natural powers are given by converting grace, but only a change of the moral bent or inclination of the soul, a happier turn given to our natural faculties by the sovereign grace of God and his Spirit.

aversion or "enmity of the carnal mind to God," which hinders it from obeying the law of God, and at last he says, "it cannot be subject to it:" *The carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be: So then they who are in the flesh cannot please God.* The fault still lies in the will of sinful man; and it is this makes it criminal, while it is not naturally impossible to be avoided or overcome.

And upon this account God is pleased to use moral means and motives, *viz.* promises, threatenings, commands, &c. toward all men, such as are suited to awaken their hearts, and excite and persuade their will to use all their natural abilities, to set their natural powers or faculties to work, to attend to, and learn, and practise faith and repentance; and it is by these very means God persuades his elect powerfully to repent and believe. But when persons will not hear, nor be influenced by these motives, because of their strong and wilful aversion to God and godliness, their crime is entirely their own, and their condemnation is just. They have natural powers or faculties in them, which, if well tried, might overcome their native propensity to vice, though they never will do it.

If the great God, in a way of sovereign mercy, gives some persons superior aids of grace to overcome this moral impotence, and conquer this aversion to God and goodness;* if he effectually leads, inclines, or persuades them by his Spirit to repent and believe in Christ, this does not at all hinder the others from exercising their natural powers of understanding and will, in believing and repenting.

Nor can any thing of their guilt and wilful impenitence be imputed to the blessed God, who is Lord of his own favours, and gives or withholds where he pleases, and "who shall say to him, what dost thou?" Why should my "eye be evil" toward my neighbour, because "the eye of God is good?" Or what pretence have I to charge God with injustice, when he does more for me than he is bound to do, though he does more for my neighbour than he has done for me?

Let this then be constantly maintained, there is a natural inward sufficiency of powers and faculties given to every sinner to hearken to the calls and offers of grace and the gospel, though they lie under a moral impotence; and there is an outward sufficiency of provision of pardon in the death of Christ, for every one who repents and accepts the gospel, though pardon is not actually procured for all men, nor secured to them. And thus much is sufficient to maintain the sincerity of God in his universal offers of grace through Jesus Christ, and his present commands to all men to repent and trust in his mercy; as well as to vindicate his equity in the last great day, when the impenitent and unbelievers shall be condemned. Their death lies at their own doors, for since there was both an outward and inward sufficiency for their recovery, the fault must lie in their own free-will, in their wilful aversion to God and Christ, and his salvation. I think this distinction of natural and moral power and impotence, will reconcile all the various expressions of Scripture on this subject, both to one another, as well as to the reason of things, which can hardly be reconciled any other way.

* Whether the Spirit of God effectually persuade the will to repent and believe in Christ, by immediate influence upon the will itself, or by setting the things of the gospel before the mind in so strong a light, and persuading the soul so to attend to them, as shall effectually influence the will, this shall not be any matter of my present debate or determination; for in both these the event and consequences are much the same. There is no new natural power or faculty given to the soul in order to faith and repentance, but a divine influence upon the old natural powers, giving them a new and better turn.

Objection II. Suppose the non-elect are not debarred from this salvation, by the want of natural powers sufficient to receive and accept it, yet since the great God foresees this their aversion to repentance and holiness, and foreknows they will never accept the salvation of Christ, and that as certainly as if they had already renounced it; does not this future certainty of the event lay an effectual bar against their believing and accepting it? For if they should repent and accept, it would contradict the foreknowledge of God.

We inquire also further, can his offers of grace be sincere to persons whom he foresees will certainly reject it? What are these offers, but delusions of their hope, and appointed aggravations to increase their guilt; since God certainly knows these offers of grace will be abused only to sinful purposes?

Answer I. As for the first part of this inquiry, if we will give ourselves leave to think impartially upon the case, we must agree, that the mere knowledge of any event, without any real influence from the power that knows, does not make the event necessary, whether it be foreknown or after-known. If I foreknow the sun will rise to-morrow, that has no more influence on the sun's rising, than my after-knowledge that it rose yesterday.

Now the great God, among his unsearchable powers and perfections, has a knowledge of the agency of free causes, as we have of necessary causes: And as he has a full view of all concomitant circumstances, he hath a way to foresee events in their contingent causes, such as the free-will of man is, as well as we have a way by reason to foresee many things in their necessary causes. It is certain he does foreknow the future contingent actions of men, even their wicked actions, because he has foretold a multitude of them in the Bible; and it is granted, that from his foreknowledge of any future event, we may infer the consequential certainty of it, because his foreknowledge cannot be deceived; yet this does not at all prove his antecedent determination of it by any decree, nor his influence upon it: Neither can we infer from God's mere foreknowledge, that there is any natural necessity of the event, since the causes are but contingent, such as man's free-will. The distinction between the certainty of a future event, with the consequent necessity of it, derived from God's foreknowledge, and the antecedent necessity of it, derived from the nature of things, or from God's actual predetermination of it, sufficiently solves this difficulty. The first may be where the second is not.

Answer II. We have reason to believe, that the gospel is never sent, nor the proposals of salvation made to any people, city, or nation, where God foresees there are none at all that will accept of it. Now in the way of God's government of this world, he deals with mankind as a number of free and moral agents, and publishes and offers sincerely his benefits to men in general, promiscuously to the elect and the non-elect: And while by these same proposals, means, and motives, he effectually and powerfully gathers his elect out of the world, he gives sufficient encouragement to all sinners to accept the same grace. God's secret foreknowledge of those who will not accept it, is by no means a sufficient reason to prevent or forbid the general offers of his grace to them, because the design of his government is to treat mankind as reasonable and moral agents.

Answer III. There may be valuable and unknown ends and purposes in the government of God, attained by his sincere forbidding sin to creatures, whom he knows

resolved to practise it; and by his sincere commands of duty to creatures whom he knows resolved to neglect it; and that without any real injury or injustice done to the sinner. The wisdom, holiness, and dignity of his government must be maintained in all the just appearances of it, though sinners will rebel against it; for the honour of divine government in the authority, wisdom, and holiness of it, is of much more importance than the welfare of ten thousand of his creatures. *Let God be true*, saith the Scripture, though *every man be a liar;* Rom. iii. 4. Let God appear sincere and wise, glorious and holy, though every man should turn rebel. God may wisely and sincerely publish the doctrines of salvation with sufficient light and evidence about them, to those who he knows will not believe them: He may wisely and sincerely offer grace and salvation to those who he foresees will refuse it.

Would it be an act of folly, or of injustice, or of untruth or insincerity, in a wise and good man, to give forth his commands to ten children, though by all present appearances, his great wisdom and sagacity foresees that seven of them will disobey him, and only three comply? Should he not approve himself to the world in doing what is wise and good, and in maintaining his parental character with honour, though some of his sons neglect their filial duty? Hereby, also, he gives his three obedient children an opportunity to shew their duty and love, though the other seven will take occasion thence to discover their rebellion. The great God, in his government of the world, conducts his unsearchable affairs by such general laws and rules, as is most for his honour; and neither his holiness nor his goodness make it necessary for him to change this his wise conduct, though he foresees many of his creatures will grow worse instead of better by it,

Answer IV. Whether or no we can guess at any of the reasons of God's government or conduct in this thing, yet the matter of fact is certain, and beyond all dispute. God has acted in this manner, and does act thus in many instances: He sent his gospel to the Jews by his Son Jesus, though he foreknew, and even foretold by his prophets, that the Jews would reject the gospel, and murder the divine messenger. He gave his word of warning, his call to repentance and righteousness, to be preached by Noah to a wicked world, for *one hundred and twenty years*, though he foreknew that very few would be reformed by Noah's preaching; and he told Noah, that at the end of those years he would bring a flood over the world to destroy the wicked inhabitants of it, who would not be reformed. Again, when he put Adam and Eve into Paradise under the law of innocency, and forbid them to eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge, we also believe he foreknew that Adam and Eve would eat this fruit, and disobey their Creator; and yet he wisely forbid them to eat it. Now, since we know that a just God hath in fact done these things, we must confess there cannot be the least injustice in them.

Nay, we may go a step further in these matters of fact. God has actually sent his Son and his gospel with miracles and divine evidence, where he knew they would not be received, or, at most, by a very few, that is, to Chorazin, Capernaum, and Bethsaida in Galilee; and yet he never sent this gospel, with such evidence, to Tyre and Sidon, to Sodom and Gomorrah, where Christ tells us, it would have been received, and the inhabitants would have *repented in sackcloth and ashes;* Matt. xi. 21: We are

sure there is nothing unjust in all this transaction, because we know God has done it, *who is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works;* Psalm cxlv. 17.

Let us then content ourselves with knowing the things that make for our own peace, and humbly submit to the wise and gracious government of God, for our own eternal happiness, though we cannot enter into the impenetrable secrets of his counsel, nor solve all difficulties therein, because our short and narrow view of things cannot comprehend them: And yet, at the same time, if we can, by our reasonings according to Scripture, cast any happy gleam of light into these darknesses of Providence, whereby any honour may be done to God, any imputation of injustice taken off from his conduct, any scruples of mankind satisfied, and any angry contentions removed; it is neither unlawful nor improper to attempt and seek after such advantages: And with this view and hope, I would propose the three following questions:

QUESTION XIV.

CAN THE DIFFERENT OPINIONS OF CHRISTIANS, CONCERNING THE OPERATIONS OF DIVINE GRACE ON THE SOULS OF MEN, BE RECONCILED?

THE corruption and degeneracy of mankind, by the fall of Adam, is generally and truly supposed by our protestant divines, to be so great and universal, and their weakness or impotence to change their own sinful natures into holiness, is so evident, both in the discourses of the sacred writers, and in the experience of men, that it is agreed among most, or all of them, there is a necessity of some aids of divine grace towards our recovery; and that not only to provide, by proper outward means, such a salvation as may be answerable to the miseries we labour under, and to propose it outwardly and plainly in the gospel, but the best of us stand in need, in our fallen state, also of some further favour from heaven, some inward assistances and influences of the grace of God, and his Spirit, in order to restore us from the ruins of our fall by repentance, and to enable us to accept of the salvation which is procured by our Lord Jesus Christ, the Mediator.

There have been some writers, indeed, who profess Christianity, who suppose nothing else is necessary, in order to the recovery of fallen man, where the gospel is preached, but the mere outward proposal of this gospel, and the representation of the readiness of God to pardon the sins of those that repent and believe, together with all the motives of hope and fear, &c. which are made use of in the Bible, to awaken and excite sinners to return unto God. They imagine that the providential disposal of the outward circumstances of men, by their enjoying the benefit of a pious education, or their sitting under a useful ministry, or the advantage of having good company frequently to converse with, and religious books brought in their way, with opportunity and leisure for reading, &c. are abundantly sufficient *to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God;* Acts xxvi. 18; "to renew them unto holiness, and to make new creatures of them," fit for the business and blessedness of heaven. Now these kind providences are what they call *the grace of God*, and the only grace they will allow to be necessary to our salvation.

This was the most common sentiment of the ancient pelagians,* who gave so much trouble to the churches of Christ in early times, and which occasioned the labours of St. Augustine to be much employed in the refutation of their errors : Afterward they allowed some illumination of the understanding by divine grace.

But I fear those who embrace the old pelagian doctrines, have too little regard to the express language of Scripture, and to its most obvious sense, when it speaks so much about the power or grace of God, and the operations of the Spirit of God, in giving us "a new heart, creating a clean heart in us, enlightening our minds, converting our souls, or turning us to God, and creating us anew after the image of God, working in us both to will and to do," &c. whereby some inward and effectual operations of divine grace upon the minds or hearts of men, are so plainly expressed, that even the remonstrants or arminians themselves, I think, in all their ranks and classes, have supposed some such inward workings of the grace of God upon the heart; because so many plain texts of Scripture could never be otherwise interpreted, without an unreasonable force put upon them. Yet, I think, it must be acknowledged, that these last-named writers do expressly allow these inward operations of God to go no further than to render men salvable, and to leave the powers of men in a state of indifference, to convert and turn themselves to God, but not effectually to determine and secure their salvation; of which I shall speak more immediately.

Among those who admit of divine grace to operate inwardly on the minds and hearts of men, there have been several different opinions what this grace is, how far it reaches, and how much of it is necessary towards the recovery of man.

But before I represent these several opinions, I would lay down some general propositions, which, I think, may be assented to by most, or all of them, and exhibit them as a medium of reconciliation to one another: And I shall rejoice, if I may be so far favoured of Providence, as to convince them how their several different sentiments may all be tolerably reconciled to these general propositions, and thereby take away a great deal of that noisy controversy which has unhappily perplexed the church of Christ upon this subject.

Proposition I. God has provided a glorious salvation for fallen men by Jesus Christ, which is sufficient for all men in its own nature, and shall be certainly effectual to all that are willing to accept of it upon his appointed terms, or in his own appointed way,

* It is pity the professed disciples and followers of the religion of Christ should have been divided into so many different opinions, and thereby given occasion to distinguish them by so many different names, which are chiefly derived either from their several tenets, or some practice of their forefathers, or from some signal writers who espoused, defended, or propagated those different sentiments. I could wish with all my soul that they were all of one opinion, and all confined only to the single name of Christians, which was given them first at Antioch, to distinguish them from heathens, Jews, and infidels of every kind. But since there are such multitudes of different sentiments among them, and in writing controversies one cannot conveniently use a long periphrasis to describe each of them, sufficient to distinguish them from the rest, we are constrained to make use of those names by which they have either distinguished themselves, or the world hath distinguished them, such as pelagians, strict calvinists, arminians or remonstrants, and moderate calvinists or reconcilers.

But here let it be observed, that the most rigid calvinists, who pretend to carry the doctrines of divine grace to the greatest height of resistless and sovereign efficiency, and the pelagians, who generally reduce it to the lowest degree, that is, to mere favourable outward provideuces, are counted the two extremes in this controversy about divine grace: And between these two there are almost as many degrees and classes of different sentiments, as there are writers. Some of them approach a little nearer to the one side, and some to the other: And it is not fit that any persons should be comprehended under any of these names, but which they themselves allow or choose, according as they come nearest to the opinions of this or the other party.

that is, in a way of repentance for sin, renewal unto holiness, and faith or dependence on the mercy of God through Jesus Christ.

Proposition II. Since God has made so glorious a provision for the recovery of mankind, he will not leave it to mere chance and uncertainty, whether any person shall repent and accept of this offered salvation or no; lest, through the universal depravation and wretched obstinacy of men, his own gracious counsels for our salvation should be frustrated, and the important labours and sufferings of his Son be sustained to no saving purpose, and rendered almost useless to the world.

Proposition III. There is no way, which I can conceive of, how God should secure or ascertain the salvation of any in general, or make it sure even to his own foreknowledge, unless it be some way or other ascertained which particular persons shall accept of this grace and salvation.

Observe, I do not here go so far as to say, the salvation of those particular persons should be made necessary by any such absolute decree, or such irresistible influences, as some have asserted; but it must some way or other be made certain to the foreknowledge of God, that such particular persons shall be saved; for if it be left at utter uncertainty as to every individual, how can it possibly be known that any individuals at all shall be finally partakers of it?

Proposition IV. God will magnify his grace in the salvation of all those who are saved in such a manner, that every one shall acknowledge his own salvation perfectly owing to the divine mercy; and that none shall have any cause or occasion to glory in himself, but shall confess, to the glory of divine grace, that it is grace that is the supreme and the chief cause that has made him to differ from others. Without this there could not be a holy harmony and concert among all the saved number, in their songs of praise to God and their Saviour: *Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but to thy grace be all the glory:* Nor, indeed, could any tolerable interpretation be given to many Scriptures, which humble the pride of man, by ascribing all to God.

Proposition V. How much soever the blessed God may design to manifest and magnify his free and sovereign grace towards sinful men, yet in every step of his procedure he will maintain such an invariable regard to his equity, as governor of the world, that he will never exercise his grace in such a manner as to take away the necessary regards and honours due to his governing justice. The great God has given man an understanding mind to distinguish between good and evil, and a freedom of will to choose one or the other, and ordained him to be always, and in all circumstances, a proper subject of his moral government. And he has determined and resolved in righteousness to manifest himself at last as a judge, and *render to every one according to his works;* Rom. ii. 6. And therefore he will maintain this righteous design of his government, to make the eternal rewards and punishments of men to depend on what they themselves have freely chosen, whether it be good or evil: Nor will he ever do any thing inconsistent with this his glorious and universal design, as a righteous Governor and Judge of his intelligent creatures.

Proposition VI. Therefore when divine grace operates upon the minds or wills of men, in order to their conversion and salvation, it is generally done in such a soft, gentle, and connatural manner, that does not put any violence upon the faculties of the soul: But for the most part, the grace of God, and his Holy Spirit, seem to operate

insensibly, as though our own faculties wrought this of themselves, and without any strong, certain, and evident notice, that it is the operation of any spirit superior to our own: And yet by the blessed effects of our conversion and sanctification, compared with the records of Scripture, we certainly infer it must be by virtue of some divine influence received from above, that the glory may be given unto God and his grace, as the supreme cause of our salvation.

Now if all the particular opinions of parties, about the methods and degrees of the exercise of this inward grace towards the salvation of men, may be pretty well reconciled to these propositions, I do not see any sufficient occasion for such very noisy and angry contests as have been found in the christian church upon this subject; since they agree in these most necessary and most important things which relate to the honour of divine justice and divine grace, as they are represented in Scripture, though perhaps there may remain some particular texts and expressions of Scripture, to which it may be hard to reconcile the contenders on either side.

However, since I think these propositions contain the most important sense and design of the revelations of Scripture on this subject, and I am persuaded they may be solidly maintained and defended by Scripture, and reason, and experience; I hope, we shall be able to shew, that all the different schemes are consistent, in some measure, with these propositions.

Let us now recount the three chief sentiments of men, under the several letters of the alphabet, A, C, and R, for the sake of better distinction.

C imagines mankind to be so entirely and universally corrupted by the fall, and impotent to all that is good, the mind to be so blind, the will so perverse, and the affections set upon carnal objects with such obstinacy, that there must be an immediate operation of God, by his grace, in a physical or supernatural manner, on all the several powers of our nature, to rectify them, and make them capable, willing, and fit to be partakers of this salvation. He supposes there must be special, efficacious, and irresistible influences of the Holy Spirit on the mind or understanding to enlighten it, to see and discern divine things in their beauty and excellency, which they can never see without this sovereign influence; there must be an immediate, effectual, and irresistible operation,* on the will and affections, to give them a new bent or bias, and an effectual turn from sin and the creature, to God and holiness: And that this habit or principle of divine grace must not only be wrought into the soul as a new habit or principle, but it must be maintained every moment by the same effectual influences of grace, and it must be entirely awakened and excited into exercise in this manner, in every good thought, word, or deed: For he thinks such Scriptures as these require it, *viz.* We are not *sufficient of ourselves to think any thing, but our sufficiency is of God;* 2 Cor. iii. 5. We are *dead in trespasses and sins;* Ephes. ii. 1. We are *alienated from the life of God, through the blindness of our hearts;* chapter iv. 18. *That which is born of the flesh is flesh,* John iii. 6, *and the works of the flesh they do: They that are in the flesh cannot please God;* Rom. viii. 8. We must be *born of the Spirit,* or we *cannot* see *the kingdom*

* Though some of this class of writers use the word *irresistible,* yet others of them dislike it, because the subjects of this grace may, and sometimes do, resist the operations of this grace and Spirit for a considerable time, but at last it must overcome; and therefore they rather choose to call it *insuperable.*

of God; John iii. 5. *Without* Christ *we can do nothing;* chapter xv. 5. *No man can come unto* Christ *unless it be given him of the Father,* or *unless the Father draw him;* chapter vi. 44, 65. *Faith is the gift of God;* Ephes. ii. 8. Our good works must be *wrought in God;* John iii. 21; or *Thou,* O Lord, *hast wrought all our works in us;* Isaiah xxvi. 12. We *must be born again;* John iii. 7. We must be new *created unto good works;* Ephes. ii. 10. We must be *quickened,* or raised from the dead; *verses* 5, 6. *It is God that worketh in us both to will and to do, of his own good pleasure;* Phil. ii. 13. And many other such Scriptures, which express the insufficiency of man, and the all-sufficient and sovereign grace of God, in the highest and most exalted language.

A renounces and disclaims utterly this opinion of C, because he supposes it to be inconsistent with the fifth proposition, or God's moral government of the world: "For," saith he, "if mankind be so utterly destitute of all power whatsoever, to repent and accept of divine grace; and if it is God himself, who, by immediate physical or supernatural influences, does irresistibly work in every good Christian a principle of repentance and holiness, by a sovereign and effectual turn and bias given to their wills, and moves them to every act of duty, by sovereign, physical, or supernatural impressions; then men are no longer moral agents, and the freedom of their wills is lost in a kind of necessary mechanism. They are acted and moved like so many puppets through the several services and stages of human life, and carried on to their own happiness in heaven, with such a force or power, and necessity, as takes away the very nature of virtue or piety, or any moral goodness, and does not leave so much as any act of obedience in their own free choice. This seems," says he, "to disappoint the blessed God of the glory of his righteous government, and of the honour due to his rectoral justice in the distribution of rewards and punishments.

"This insuperable and overswaying grace," says he, "seems also to run counter to many of those Scriptures which represent this moral government of God, as carried on by rational means, arguments, and motives, drawn from the excellency of religion, and from the fear and hope of rewards and punishments, by which the holy Scriptures are perpetually addressing the consciences of men: For if this be indeed the case," saith A, "men have no more real freedom than so many wooden images, actuated, impelled, and moved onward to the several ends which the maker of them designed. Now it can be no pleasure nor glory to the all-wise, all-righteous, and almighty Being, who governs all things, to reward such creatures of mechanism with happiness in another world; nor will the honour of his wise and righteous judgment be manifested by such a conduct."

On the other hand, C, who persists in the truth of this fifth proposition, and of God's moral government, still pretends that the wills of men, though swayed by irresistible grace, are yet truly free in every good work, because they still feel in themselves a spontaneity or willingness to repent or obey, when God works thus powerfully upon them; though they confess they have not the freedom or liberty of choosing and refusing, because the grace is, and must be, irresistible, or insuperable, and efficacious. Thus it is plain C is desirous to maintain all the six foregoing propositions, and thinks his scheme is consistent with them; and perhaps it might be so deemed, as he thus defends and explains himself.

But A is by no means satisfied with this sort of solution of the difficulty, this sort of freedom which admits not the will of man to choose or refuse compliance with the operations of grace: "For it is plain," saith he, "in this case, the persons who are so irresistibly moved to repentance and good works may have a sort of supposed consciousness of their freedom all the way, because they feel themselves made willing; but it is a mere mistaken supposition, for they are no longer free creatures, because this very willingness is powerfully imposed upon them, and they cannot withstand it."

Therefore A is resolved to avoid all these inconveniencies, and on this account he supposes, that both in the first conversion of the soul, and in all future good actions, God has no further hand than this, *viz.* first, that he forms the nature and temper of every man, with all his intellectual and animal powers, a knowing mind and free will; that then he, by his providence, brings them to the hearing and knowledge of their own miserable state by nature, and the way of salvation, by hearing or reading of the gospel of Christ; that he secretly and gently, by particular occurrences of life, and by the insensible motions of his own Spirit, sets before men the things of God, and Christ, and eternity, with all motives proper to affect and persuade them; that he strikes some supernatural light into their understandings, and he allows some suasive or moral influences or touches of the grace of God upon the will of men, so far as may relieve them against the too powerful opposition of corrupt nature, and render repentance and conversion easier and more practicable: And he maintains also, that without these assistances, fallen man would not repent and be converted; and it is found among his expressions, "that grace is absolutely necessary to our having sufficient power to do good and to perform every act of piety."*

But after all this grace, A leaves men in a state of indeterminate doubt and indifference, whether they shall be finally persuaded to repentance or no: And this is the point of controversy between the disputants on this subject. This A maintains, that grace leaves the heart of man still in a sort of equilibrium or wavering balance and uncertainty, to determine entirely for itself, whether it will receive the gospel or not, except, perhaps, in some very extraordinary case, as Paul, and some of the apostles, &c. who seem to be converted at once. And in short this is the chief centre or hinge, whereon the debate between A and C turns.

And yet A supposes still his doctrine is very consistent with all the six propositions, and particularly with the fourth, which ascribes the conversion and salvation of men so entirely to divine grace, as the supreme cause: "For," saith he, "all the Scriptures which ascribe our repentance and conversion to grace, are always supposed to speak in a consistence with God's moral government over free creatures, which many other texts assert and maintain: And therefore those expressions of grace must be interpreted with some limitation."

A thinks fit to add also, that he gives a fair exposition of the Scriptures, which ascribe our salvation to the operations of grace, because grace has the chief hand therein; and without these various and necessary operations of grace, sinful man never

* See the remonstrances made by those who opposed the synod of Dort, whereby they plainly distinguish their opinions from the pelagians, and use this language which I have here represented. I wish all those Christians in our age and nation, who profess to follow the opinions of the remonstrants, did but come so near to the doctrines of Scripture, as the phrases and expressions of these men import.

would be converted and saved. Some of the professed partisans of A have thus expressed themselves.*

THE FIRST WAY OF RECONCILIATION.

R, who cannot entirely approve of the opinion of C, for the reasons which A has given, yet is as much displeased with A's opinion, notwithstanding all the excuses he has made; because he fears, it seems, to contradict many of those express Scriptures which ascribe the conversion, sanctification, and salvation of men, so powerfully, and plainly, and certainly, to God, and his Spirit, and his grace: And therefore he chooses another sentiment, which he thinks may reconcile all these difficulties; for he supposes his opinion to be more obviously and evidently consistent with the six propositions before laid down, and to be much more agreeable to all the expressions of Scripture, which are urged both on the side of A and C: "And on this account it is more happily suited," saith he, "to ascribe to free grace its full glory, as well as maintain the honours of God's moral government."

R's opinion therefore is this: He supposes that the fall of man has so perverted his natural powers, that inward effectual grace is necessary to save him; but that the will of man, both in its first and general turn from sin to repentance and holiness, as well as in all future acts of obedience, maintains its own liberty, as a power free to act, or not to act: And that it shall never be thus sovereignly, entirely, and irresistibly moved by God, the all-wise governor of mankind, as C imagines. But that, though there are some powerful divine influences, both toward the mind and the will, without which the man would never repent and be saved, yet the will is still a free faculty, and as such, is the only proper subject of moral government; and therefore its freedom to choose good or evil, must be always finally left to its own determination, without which there would be no vice or virtue, nothing proper for reward or punishment, nor for any moral subjection to a wise and righteous Creator and Governor.

But since R believes the doctrine of particular persons elected to salvation, he goes a middle way to secure the salvation of Christ to the particular persons designed, *viz.* R supposes, that divine grace strikes such a new and perspicuous light into the mind or understanding by supernatural influence, and sets the great things of the gospel and eternity in such a powerful and bright view before the soul, as fully convinces the judgment, and such as God knows will effectually and certainly persuade the will, and all the following powers, to comply with the proposals of grace, both in the first actual turn of the heart or conversion, as well as in all future good actions: And as he knows it will have this certain effect, so he designs it shall.

"Thus," says he, "the will of man is left to enjoy its own natural freedom, and to choose or refuse piety and happiness. God, by a knowledge and foresight of all the natures and tempers of men, and all the events of things, and by concurring thus far by

* In representing the calvinist and the arminian schemes here, I am not sensible that I have ascribed any one opinion to either of them, but what I am supported in by John Calvin and Francis Turretine on one side, and by Philip Limborch and the remonstrants at the synod of Dort on the other side. I grant it has been too often the practice of controversial writers on the calvinist side, to represent the arminians in the pelagian form; and the writers of the arminian party have again represented all the calvinists in the form of supralapsarians and antinomians: But this is the way to widen the divisions of the christian world, and inflame the spirits of men against their brethren, and not to reconcile them, which R has here attempted to do.

the operations of his Spirit of grace, he does that by his grace, which he is certain will issue in the accomplishment of his own gracious designs; and yet he does not make it necessary by any absolute physical influence. He chooses some men to repentance and salvation from the beginning, he forms their natural powers, and he disposes of their providential circumstances in life, so as he foreknows will answer his gracious and eternal purposes; he enlightens their understandings so powerfully by his grace and Spirit, that he, who knows their frame, is certain will finally persuade their wills to comply with the proposals and demands of his gospel. And thus his electing grace obtains its original design, without constraining the will of man, or entrenching upon the honour of God's moral government."

And to speak yet further in a philosophical sense, R supposes the will of man to be so free and undeterminable by his other powers, that he does not suppose it to be naturally and necessarily moved in this compliance, even by the light of the mind; but that it feels itself persuaded and overcome in a moral way, by the powerful motives and arguments which are set before the mind, and freely determines itself, and makes choice of the grace of God and salvation.*

And he adds further, that all these Scriptures beforementioned, which C has alleged, may be sufficiently and happily explained to maintain our own original sinfulness and impotence to all that is good, and to secure the necessity of divine grace; since he acknowledges that without this divine sovereign influence or illumination of the mind, the will of man would never be changed; and that God bestows this light or powerful illumination on the soul, on purpose to produce this divine change on the will; and he foreknows certainly, and designs that it shall produce it, though he does not make it necessary and irresistible. The great God may properly be said to "convert the soul, to change the heart or the will, to regenerate the man, to create a new nature within, and to save a sinner," when he strikes such a supernatural light into the mind, as he certainly knows and intends shall finally prevail over the will by moral influence or persuasion, though not by physical necessity, or any over-powering force, and absolute determination.†

"Thus," says he, "divine grace has its complete honour, for it is the first and supreme mover in conversion, and without it no man would repent or turn to God; and hereby also, God has all the honours of his own government, in a moral way, over creatures that are endued with freedom of will to choose or refuse their own happiness."

If I were to give my sentiments in the matter, I must confess, I should like the opinion of R best, inasmuch as it happily secures and confirms the salvation of such particular persons as God has chosen, without making machines of them; for though R allows the grace of God to enlighten the mind, so far as shall certainly gain a victory over the will, and persuade it to repent, believe, and obey God, yet he supposes the will is left still in its native freedom, which cannot be constrained, or absolutely and necessarily determined in its acts or volitions, even by any ideas or perceptions of the

* See this matter explained more at large, in Section 5, of an *Essay on the Freedom of Will, both in God and Man.*

† Whereas some call this grace *irresistible*, and some prefer the word *insuperable;* R rather chooses to call it *effectual,* which is a scriptural term; and *victorious,* which is favoured by *Matt.* xii. 20, Christ shall bring forth *judgment unto victory;* which is interpreted, that he shall bring forth the knowledge of his gospel unto victory over the nations: Or it may be explained, "he shall bring forth the judgment of the mind finally to a victory over the will and affections," which is a very near allusion, if not the true interpretation of the place.

mind, and he allows them only the moral force of motives to persuade the will: Thus the full honour of divine government, in all the moral views of it, is sufficiently maintained, as well as the proper freedom or liberty of the will of man; and God bestows salvation finally on those only who are persuaded to repent and accept of it. And herein lies the glory of God's moral government, that distributes rewards or punishments, according as men choose or refuse good or evil.

But I think there might be a little improvement made to the sentiments of R thus: Is there not a great distinction to be made between the habit, or the principle of holiness in the heart, and the acts or exercises of it in the life? It is certain there are, or may be, infused habits or principles, as well as acquired ones: As for instance; the apostles had a habit of talking Hebrew or Syro-chaldaic as their native language, which was acquired by learning from their childhood; but they had an infused habit or principle of speaking other strange languages, given them by the supernatural power of God or his Spirit, at the day of pentecost, which they exercised immediately with great freedom, as related in *Acts* ii. 4—11.

Now since there may be habits or principles of faith, repentance, and holiness, infused or inwrought immediately by divine power and grace, prior to all acts or exercises thereof; why may we not suppose, that besides the principles of light infused into the mind, whereby the judgment is convinced, there is an infused principle of holiness also formed or inwrought in the soul, in a physical or supernatural manner, by the Spirit or grace of God, which may excite and influence the will toward its acts or volitions, but not constrain it? I mean, why may not the divine power, which formed the soul, give it a propensity or habitual inclination to what is good, like that which Adam had the first moment of his creation, though in a lower degree? This is part of *the image of God* which he had at first, and which is now to be *renewed* in man: And as this principle was an infused habit in Adam, why may it not be so in every true convert now? And further, as this did not necessitate the acts of the will to obedience, even in the day of innocence, so neither doth it now; but only gives it a disposition toward actual repentance and obedience, faith and holiness, at proper occasions: And I think this may very well be called *new creation, regeneration,* or *resurrection from the dead,* in the scriptural sense.

I do not see that this concession destroys the moral government of God over man now, any more than it did over Adam in his innocence, and especially since all moral government hath its special regard to the actions wrought by the soul, rather than to the habits or principles which are in it; principles and habits neither are, nor can be, directly under the command of the will, as all actual volitions or actions are, which are therefore most properly subject to moral regulations.

I think all the rest of R's sentiments may stand just as he proposed them.

I acknowledge, that there are several texts of Scripture, which in their literal sense, seem to speak the language of C, wherein the ruin of our nature, and its impotence to all that is good, is set forth in its strongest light, by the metaphors of *blindness,* and *death in trespasses and sins:* And the sovereignty of divine grace is described in its brightest and most sovereign and insuperable influences. But still I cannot help querying, as both A and R do, whether this literal sense of those words, this absolute and necessary determination both of the mind and will, and all the powers of man in its first conversion, and in all future good actions, does not detract too much from God's

moral government of the world? And whether all these metaphors and emblems, and bright representations of Scripture, may not be sufficiently interpreted in plain language, and their proper sense, according to the explication of the grace of God, and its efficacious influences, which R has made; especially if we take in the almighty infusion of a supernatural habit of holiness; always remembering that R allows the divine influences on the mind to be so great, as he knows will certainly persuade the will to repent and accept of grace, and designs that it shall have this effect, though not in a way of resistless force and necessity. And why may not this sufficiently answer those Scriptures which assert God's working in us *both to will and to do of his good pleasure?* Phil. ii. 13.

On the other hand, I question whether the opinions of A have ever been easily and plainly reconciled with such a multitude of Scriptures, which the followers of C produce in the defence of their opinions concerning divine grace.

However it be, I think the sentiments both of A, C, and R, may, in some tolerable measure, be reconciled to all the six propositions I laid down at first; at least they all declare they design them to be so; though perhaps some of them are more easily and happily suited to some of these propositions, and others do best consist with the rest of them. Thus much for the first part of this discourse.

THE SECOND WAY OF RECONCILIATION.

A further principle of reconciliation between A, C, and R, is now in my thoughts, and it is this:

Let us inquire whether the sentiments of A, as well as of R and C, do not imply and suppose the certain designation of certain persons to a final salvation; and consequently whether A has any reason to cast any reproaches upon the doctrine of particular election and special grace, since his own sentiments will lead very nearly to the same doctrine? This will appear by the following steps of inquiry:

1. Doth not A suppose, that the providential transactions of divine power and grace, in the formation of the natural powers of every man, and the disposal of the circumstances of any man's life, under pious parents, or an useful ministry, or occasional conversation, &c. were designed by the great God, as helps and mediums towards the repentance and salvation of those that are saved?

2. Does not A allow of such operations of grace, by illumination and suasion of the mind and will, as the great God sees to be not only sufficient, but necessary under the present dreadful degeneracy of man, toward the conversion and salvation of those who are saved, even though they proceed no farther than to leave the will of man in a state of balancing indifference, to accept or refuse the offered grace?

3. Does not A likewise admit these operations of grace to be exerted with a friendly design towards these men, to facilitate their faith and repentance, and make the way plainer and easier towards their salvation? And does he not grant that God is best pleased, when such a person repents and accepts of his gospel, according to his kind designs?

4. Does he not also believe, that the blessed God foresees and foreknows that these men, by the free use of their natural powers, thus far assisted by divine grace, will be finally and effectually persuaded to believe, and repent, and be saved?

5. Has not the blessed God, who "knows all his own works from the beginning," designed from eternity to bestow all these advantages on those particular persons, and to carry them on so far, that he foresees their repentance and salvation will be the certain consequences of this his grace, though not the necessary effects of it?

6. I would ask, whether, if the blessed God gives so much outward and inward grace to certain men, as he foresees and knows will be certainly improved by them to their salvation, and without which they could not repent and be saved, may it not be properly said, that God designs the salvation of these particular persons, that he elects or chooses them unto eternal life,* that he converts and brings them to repentance by his grace, and that he stands justly entitled to their everlasting praises, as the supreme and certain author of their faith, and repentance, and salvation?

In the last place then, may I not inquire whether or no it be not consistent with A's own opinions in the main, to allow those expressions of Scripture their proper force and meaning, which speak of God's "election of men to salvation, of his choosing them in Christ Jesus, of his giving them to Christ, of his bestowing faith and repentance upon them, preserving or keeping them by his power unto salvation, and conducting them safely onward to happiness?" And whether it will not be much more natural and easy, to interpret such Scriptures concerning the election, conversion, and salvation of particular persons, than to put a strain and force upon some of them, and to interpret them only concerning his giving the outward means of grace to a nation or a people, or choosing the heathen nations in general to be acquainted with his salvation, without the application of it to any particular person whatsoever?

I would fain inquire, whether or no, if serious Christians are but desirous and inclined to come as near to each other as they can, in their sentiments of divine things, if they are but willing to be reconciled to one another, as far as the present darknesses and difficulties will allow of; I say, whether they may not embrace one another heartily, and unite so far in their sentiments as I have represented? This will take away a thousand cavils and contentions, and a thousand unchristian reproaches, from the lips and pens of those who worship the same God, believe in the same Saviour, hope for the operations of the same blessed Spirit, and desire to ascribe their salvation to the same grace of God, who is blessed for evermore? Amen.

QUESTION XV.

WHAT IS THE STATE AND CONDITION OF THE HEATHENS, WHO HAVE NEVER HEARD OF THE GOSPEL, OR HAVE UTTERLY FORGOT AND LOST ALL NOTICES OF IT?

IT is not to be doubted that the gospel has been twice preached to all mankind, first by Adam to his family, which came from the mouth of God, who promised the seed of the woman to become a Saviour; and then by Noah, who was a preacher of righteousness, and doubtless of grace also, to his three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Now Adam and Noah were the fathers of all mankind, before and since the flood: And in the early ages, it is evident, that the knowledge of the true God and religion, in some

* May not the words of St. Paul, *Rom.* viii. 29, be perfectly applied to this scheme, *whom he foreknew, he also did predestinate, &c.*

degrees of it, did continue in several families of Noah's sons for a considerable time; such as the families of Melchizedek king of Salem, Abimelech king of Gerar, Job in the land of Uz, and his four friends, and many others. And whosoever, in following ages, retained so much knowledge of God and his promised mercy, as to engage them in repentance of all their sins, in faith or dependence on divine grace, and in new obedience to the will of God, might obtain salvation.

How many or how few these were, and what favourable allowances God might make, and other inquiries relating to this subject, may be found more largely discoursed of in a treatise, intitled, *A Caveat against Infidelity*,* and in a book called, *The Strength and Weakness of Human Reason*,† both published a few years ago. Nor do I know how to explain and determine the questions relating to this subject, in a more conspicuous manner, than those two writings have done it; so that I choose to ask the favour of my readers to seek their satisfaction in those Discourses.

However, concerning the heathens, I may venture to deliver one plain and certain truth, because it is manifestly founded upon Scripture; and that is, since the corruption of nature through all mankind is so great and deplorable, since the hope of recovery, by the covenant of grace, hath only those faint and feeble discoveries of it made to the heathens, which the general *goodness and long-suffering of God* might afford them, and since they have no outward call from the word to repentance and hope, it is evident that the righteous God will inflict but small punishment upon such heathen sinners, in comparison of those who shall fall under the express sentence of damnation, for having neglected or resisted the grace of the gospel, which has been published to them by Jesus Christ or the apostles, or by any discoveries of the things of the New Testament, in the nations or ages where they have lived. And thus our Lord himself declares, when he denounces his heavy woes against Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum, and asserts, that the punishments of Tyre and Sidon, Sodom and Gomorrah, shall be tolerable in comparison of those who shall be found sinners against the clear and express publication of the gospel, in the great judgment-day; *Matt.* xi. 20—24.

The testimony of St. Paul, *Acts* xvii. 30, seems also to support the same opinion, where he tells us, that "God winked at those times of this ignorance," wherein the heathen and idolatrous nations lived before the manifestation of the gospel. The word ὑπεριδων doth not mean that he let them go without punishment, for *Rom.* ii. 9, 12, "tribulation and anguish will fall upon every soul that doeth evil, whether Jew or gentile." Those who have *sinned without law, shall perish without law:* But God took but little notice of them with an eye of punishing justice, in comparison of those who shall hear of those solemn calls to repentance which are now given to men by the gospel of Christ, and the preaching of the judgment of the world by him. Thus every sinner's punishment in the other world, shall stand in an exact proportion to the aggravation of the sins they have committed, considered together with the different degrees of light and knowledge they have received. Divine justice will measure out to every one their righteous proportions, with perfect exactness.

* See Vol. IV. pages 47—94. † See Vol. II. pages 319—404.

QUESTION XVI.

WHAT WILL BE THE STATE AND CONDITION OF THAT LARGE PART OF MANKIND WHO DIE IN INFANCY, UNDER ANY OF THE DISPENSATIONS OF THE COVENANT OF GRACE?

ANSWER. It is a very large part of mankind, indeed, that dies in the infant state, before they arrive at any capacity to know God or their duty, virtue or vice, and therefore, they cannot be charged with actual sin, or rewarded for actual obedience. If we may judge by the yearly bills of mortality,* we find more than a third part of the race of man dying before they arrive at two years old, and about half before five: A dreadful devastation of nature! A wide spectacle of ruin, diffused over all nations and ages, by the sin of their common father?

It is true, we cannot tell at what age of life, or at what degrees of growing reason, the great God will appoint children to stand upon their own foot, and will deal with them as rational creatures, as intelligent and free agents, according to their own personal actions and behaviour. Some perhaps shall sooner be adjudged capable and sufficient to act for themselves, and shall be dealt with according to their own moral conduct, and some much later; and both according to their degrees of capacity to know, to choose, and to refuse good or evil. But this season is known only to God himself, and the "Judge of all the earth will do right;" *Gen.* xviii. 25.

In the mean time, while they are deemed infants, and have no personal sin or obedience of their own, but only lie under the sentence of death for the sin of Adam, so far as it is imputed to them, let us not send any of their little souls into a separate state of torment, as soon as death has seized their bodies, without an express divine warrant: Nor let us raise up their bodies again from the dead, and then doom them, soul and body, to intense anguish and everlasting fire and sorrow, merely for Adam's sin, unless we can find some very evident sentence of this kind passed upon them in the word of God. The equity and the compassion of a God, so far as we can judge of it by the light of reason, would not inflict so severe and eternal a punishment on these little creatures, who are personally innocent or free from actual sin: And unless we can find some divine revelation that pronounces it with great strength and evidence, let us not so far contradict the gentler dictates of nature and reason, as to assert this opinion for truth, nor impose it on our own belief, nor on the belief of others.

Let us try then, whether we cannot find out some milder punishment for their share of the guilt of Adam, in the Bible. May we not humbly suppose, that a most wise, most righteous, and most merciful God, will deal with them according to the following principles, derived partly from the Scriptures, and partly from the reason of things?

Principle I. As the children of men had all been born innocent and happy, and

* Perhaps it will be said, that the bills of mortality in or near London, are no sufficient rule to judge of the deaths of mankind in general, because multitudes of young creatures die there for want of air and conveniencies of life. But let it be remembered also, that in the savage nations of Asia, Africa, and America, there are more of those young creatures die for want of due care, and for want also of the methods of human skill to relieve the diseases of children; and by this means some of the savage countries are almost depopulated, and the nations destroyed, as travellers inform us. So that take all mankind together, and I am ready to think the bills of mortality in and near London may pretty nearly yield us a just calculation as to this matter.

had worn out their infant state in innocence and happiness, if Adam, their father and surety, had stood firm in his obedience; so by his fall and disobedience to God, we have already proved that they are all involved with him in so much of his guilt and misery, as that they come into the world with natures corrupted and vitiated, both with the principles of sin and seeds of death: This we have shewn before: And they are exposed hereby to death, that is, to the common and everlasting forfeiture of all those blessings, and all that life and existence, both of soul and body, which God had freely given them: See Question XI. Section 3, Of Eternal Death. And as for the execution of this general sentence, we find it so far executed on children, that they suffer the pains and agonies of mortality, and at last bodily death; though they have *not sinned*, that is, personally and actually, *after the similitude of Adam's transgression*, as in *Rom.* v. 14, and there the Scripture leaves them, that is, in death and the grave.

Principle II. It has been granted, that the actual and personal sin of Adam might provoke his Maker so far, as to continue his soul in its natural immortality after his bodily life was forfeited and finished; and this is because he was a personal and actual sinner: And God may see it divinely proper, that he should suffer long anguish of conscience, tribulation, and wrath after death, according to the aggravation of his personal crime, that is, upon supposition that he accepted not the covenant of grace: Yet it does not follow, that the great God will punish the mere imputed guilt of his infant posterity in so severe a manner; or that he will continue their souls in being, whose whole life and being is forfeited by Adam's sin, and that he will give them their being and life again, and fix them in an immortal state, merely to make them suffer long anguish and endless misery for the sin of Adam. Nor is this severity any where taught us in the word of God; and I am well assured, that our reasonings from the goodness and equity of God will incline us to judge more favourably of his sentence upon infants, and will lead us to the milder and softer side of the question, as I intimated before.

Principle III. There is one very good reason to suppose that the great God will resume the forfeited life and existence of the souls of children, as well as of their bodies, and will not continue their immortal spirits to suffer tormenting punishment for ever; because having no personal sin, they can have no anguish of conscience, nor inward vexation: They cannot suffer any self-reproaches for sin, for they have committed none: Nor can this be conveyed to them by any imputed guilt of Adam, though it is a very great part of the punishment of souls for actual sin, as being the natural effect of personal transgression and guilt. If therefore they are punished for Adam's sin in another world, it must probably be by actual pains and torments inflicted on them by God himself, since the most natural effects of sin, that is, guilt and anguish of conscience, cannot reach them: And is it agreeable to the nature and mercy of a God to inflict such positive and endless pains or torments with his own hand, on such little creatures, who are free from all personal iniquity, and have no other crime but that they were born of Adam?

Principle IV. If you should imagine that the mere sense of the loss of God's favour, without any actual inflictions of pain, is all the punishment that children shall suffer in their souls; tell me how that can be without some positive and actual agency of God in it? For unless God, some way or other, give them a sense what his favour is, and what is the loss of it, how can they have this knowledge? And since they have not lived in this world long enough to acquire any ideas of a "God, a creature, a law,

obedience and transgression, sin and duty, the favour of God, the loss of his favour, punishment," &c. it is hardly to be supposed that the blessed God will furnish them with these ideas in a future state of immortality, merely, and for no other reason, but to make them feel their misery in their eternal loss of the divine favour; and that on no other account, but for having been once born into this world in an unhappy relation to Adam, the actual sinner. Those short miseries which end with life, are much more easy to be accounted for upon the foot of divine resentment for Adam's sin, than any everlasting pains.

The late learned Doctor Ridgley, indeed, in his *Discourses of Original Sin*, with modesty and ingenuity, has represented this sentiment to the world: And I cannot but declare myself so far of his opinion, that the blessed God will not impress on them these ideas of divine things, nor shew the souls of infants, in the other world, what are those powers and pleasures which they have lost by Adam's sin, on purpose only to torment those little creatures, who never knew what sin was, nor ever sinned against God in their wills, by actual personal disobedience.

But whereas Doctor Ridgley supposes the immortal existence of such infant souls in a sort of stupid ignorance or insensibility, which the Scripture no where intimates, I think it is much more natural and reasonable to suppose, that God will deprive both body and soul of life, which Adam had forfeited for himself and for them, according to the first threatening of death: And since the book of Scripture has not revealed it, I cannot find it in the book of reason, nor can I conceive what end it can attain in divine providence, to continue so many millions of infant souls in an eternal state of stupor: Is it agreeable to the conduct of infinite wisdom, and the government of a God, to maintain such an innumerable multitude of ideots, equal in number to almost all the rest of the human race, in a long endless duration, and to reign over such an immense nation of senseless and thoughtless immortals?

I add yet further, it is very hard to understand how a human soul, which I cannot conceive of but as a thinking being, should exist without any ideas at all, and that for eternal ages. Upon the whole, therefore, the state of non-existence, to which we here suppose them to be reduced after death, is much more probable, being the least demerit of imputed sin, or an everlasting forfeiture of life, and a sort of endless punishment without pain.

Principle V. Neither have we any intimations from Scripture, that all the bodies of infants will be raised again at the great day, in order to come into judgment: And if we will suffer ourselves to think and judge without prejudice, we may find it highly probable, that there are many thousands of infant bodies, which will never be restored to life, nor their persons be summoned to judgment in the last great day; and that for these two reasons:

Reason I. We have before shewn, that as bodily death was threatened by the law of innocency, or covenant of works to Adam, as the head of a numerous race, so this is evidently executed upon all his infant-seed; for "death has reigned over them" in every age, as the punishment of Adam's sin, being so far imputed to them; as *Rom.* v. 12—14. But there is no resurrection of the body included in that threatening; nor can we reasonably suppose, that the most gracious God, who has never threatened it, will raise these infant bodies into an endless life, merely to suffer everlasting anguish and pain in the body, for the imputed sin of their first father, since they have no

actual or personal guilt of their own. Mere imputed sin, without actual transgression, is the least and lowest sort of guilt that can be; and therefore it is highly probable, a righteous and merciful God will inflict on them the least and lowest sort of punishment threatened to sin, that is, death in the mildest sense of it, or an universal and eternal destruction of soul and body, which are forfeited by sin.

Reason II. When the resurrection of sinners is mentioned in Scripture, it is always that they may be judged expressly "according to their works, according to what they have done in the body, whether good or evil;" 2 *Cor.* v. 10. Now infants have done no works of sin or righteousness: They are not moral agents in the infant-state; and it is not said in Scripture, that such shall be brought into judgment. The inquiries and decisions of a judgment-seat are only appointed for actual sinners. See the words of Scripture on this subject: John v. 28, 29, *The hour is coming, when—all that are in their graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation.* Rev. xx. 12, 13, *And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God,* that is, the high and low, rich and poor, and they *were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up* its dead, *and death and hell,* or the grave, or the separate state, *gave up* their dead, *and they were judged, every man according to their works.* Observe here, that the words *small and great* must signify persons of high and low degree, who can be judged according to their works; but the word *small* cannot signify infants, because they have no moral works for which they might be judged.*

Principle VI. And indeed, where any future punishments of the other world are represented in Scripture, it is always for the actual transgressions of persons who are capable of knowing, choosing, and refusing good or evil, which infants are not capable of doing; for the word of God gives us this very character of an infant, *Isaiah* vii. 16, *viz.* that he "knows not to refuse the evil and choose the good." Let us look into the texts where future judgment and future punishments are described: *Eccles.* xi. 9, *Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth,—and walk in the ways of thy heart,—but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment;* and chapter xii. 14, it is only visible works of the life, or secret workings of the thoughts, that is, moral actions, that God will *bring into judgment,* whether they be good or evil. Matt. xii. 36, *Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.* Matt. xxv. 41, 42, *Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire,—for I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat;*—I was *naked, and ye clothed me not, &c.* Rom. ii. 3, 5, 6, *Thinkest thou, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and dost the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? Thou treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who will render to every man according to his deeds.* 2 Cor. v. 10, *We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in the body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.* All this refers only to the

* And to confirm this sense of the words *small and great,* let it be considered, that in another text of the same writer, these words cannot mean infants and adults, but must signify poor and rich, or mean and honourable, *Rev.* xi. 18, because they are both said to fear the name of the Lord, which cannot be ascribed to infants.

actual works of men: Nor can I find in the whole book of God, any one syllable of the punishment of infants, either in their souls or bodies, after this life; all that the Scripture reveals of punishment in a world to come, whether it be in the separate state, or at the resurrection, falls upon those only who have been guilty of actual personal transgressions, and are proper objects of a judgment.

Principle VII. You will ask here, "Is there no resurrection then for the bodies of the infants of good and pious persons, who have repented of their sins, returned to God, and accepted of the covenant of grace in all its extent, for time and eternity? Is there no happy rising-day for the dying children of those parents, who have laid a humble claim to God as their God, and the God of their seed, and have devoted themselves to him according to the language of God's covenant with Abraham? Do not these blessings *come on the gentiles through Jesus Christ?* Gal. iii. 14. You will ask, whether I myself have not explained the covenant of grace, with the blessings of it, to extend to the children of believers, or good men, under Question XII. Section 6? And must all these children lie in the grave and under the power of death for ever? Doth not God's being their God imply their resurrection? Doth not Christ himself prove the resurrection of the dead from this very principle, that *God is the God of Abraham, and Isaac, &c.* Luke xx. 37, 38? And must not such children therefore be raised from the dead? To this I answer:

Answer. I have allowed this under the Twelfth Question, and I confirm it all here: For whatever I have said under this last question concerning infants, relates to those only who stand upon the foot of Adam's broken covenant of works, and have no interest in a better covenant; that is, it belongs only to the children of wicked men who died in Adam, and who have not received or accepted of the covenant of mercy and life through Jesus Christ: But the infant offspring of those who have repented of sin, and accepted of the covenant of grace, are, in my opinion, included in the blessings of the covenant of Abraham, which come upon gentile believers and their seed, as well as on the Jews, through Jesus Christ, in the spiritual and eternal extent of them; for *Christ was the minister of the circumcision,* or sent to the jewish nation, *to confirm the promises of God made unto the fathers,* that is, Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, *and that the gentiles might glorify God for his mercy.* See *Gal.* iii. 14. *Rom.* xv. 8. And therefore there is much reason to believe from many places of Scripture, that as they have a share in this covenant of grace and the blessings thereof, through the faith and piety of their parents, being incapable to put forth an act of faith and piety themselves, so they shall be raised again to an eternal life of holiness and happiness together with their parents, as the sons and daughters of Abraham who have God for their God.

Principle VIII. As there are several texts of Scripture, from which I suppose such inferences may be made, so, if I mistake not, there are one or two speeches of the prophets which seem to intend and mean the resurrection and happiness of the children of true Christians.

If we look into *Isaiah* lxv. 23, God is there speaking concerning the blessing which shall come upon his people in the christian church, when those Jews who had refused the Messiah were cut off, and God calls his own people by another name, that is, Christians. The promise is this: *They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble; for they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them.* Now we

find by experience, in all ages of the christian church, that infants die, as well as they did before; and yet it is said, Their parents *shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble:* How can this be fulfilled, but by the right of their children to the extensive blessings of the covenant of grace, that is, a resurrection to eternal life? And it is put upon this foot, that *they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord,* they enjoy the blessing of their father Abraham, in whom "all nations are blessed," that God is their God, and the God of their offspring together with them.

The other text is, *Jer.* xxxi. 15, compared with *Matt.* ii. 17, where the prophet Jeremiah is cited: *A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping; Rachel weeping for her children, refused to be comforted, because they were not. Thus saith the Lord, Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thy eyes from tears: Thy work shall be rewarded, saith the Lord, and they shall come again from the land of the enemy; and there is hope in thine end, saith the Lord, that thy children shall come again to their own border.* Though this prophecy might have some sort of accomplishment at the captivity of the children of Benjamin, the son of Rachel, by Nebuchadnezzar, and the restoration of their posterity by Cyrus; yet it seems more literally, plainly, and expressly, to be fulfilled by the slaughter of the infants in Bethlehem, near Ramah, as St. Matthew explains it, and by their return from the land of the last enemy, death, and their standing in their own border, that is, in the heavenly Canaan, where their parents, considered in prophecy as true Israelites, have obtained the promised inheritance: And thus the mother's travail, in bearing the children, as well as her work of faith and prayer for her children, shall be rewarded by beholding them return from the land of death, their common enemy, and placed together with themselves in the heavenly paradise, which is their border or portion.

It is therefore only the children of wicked parents, concerning whom I suppose the wisdom, justice, and mercy of God will join to destroy them entirely by death, or to resume the forfeited life of soul and body.

It seems evident to me, that though there are some hints and reasonable hopes of the happy resurrection of the offspring of good men to be derived from Scripture, yet all other children in this world are also brought down to death for the sin of Adam by the word of God, and they are left in death: But neither reason nor Scripture, so far as I can find, provides any happiness or unhappiness, any reward or punishment for them in a world to come; and how can we go further than reason or Scripture will lead us?

And if I may freely speak my own sentiments here, I would say, since neither reason nor Scripture certainly and plainly teach us any thing concerning the souls of the infants of wicked men after death; and if I must not leave them in a state of non-existence, I would much rather choose to suppose them at the death of the body entered into a new and personal state of trial, than I would condemn them to a wretched resurrection and eternal misery, for nothing else but because they were born of Adam, the original transgressor.

This is only a comparative thought by the way. But to pursue and support my present scheme of their annihilation at death, I must answer two or three objections following.

Principle IX. Against this hypothesis it will be perhaps objected, first, of what use

can it be for the great God to bring so many thousand souls of the children of wicked parents into being, to destroy them so soon?

Answer I. Who can tell me of what use it can be for God to create so many millions of animated beings in the sea, or in the woods and deserts, for so short a continuance? Who can tell, why he should exert his almighty power to produce so many myriads of fishes which man never sees, and insects, engines of curious and divine artifice, of which millions are brought forth in one day, which are never seen of men, and which in a few weeks, or months, perish again, and are lost for ever? It is as easy with omnipotence to create souls as bodies, or to make men as worms: And it is the illustrious and inconceivable magnificence of his government, that he can produce worlds of such wonderful creatures, and destroy them without any loss, though he should never acquaint us with any of his reasons or purposes for this conduct. Why must such sorry creatures as men are, be acquainted with the designs and reasons of every thing that a God thinks fit to do?

Answer II. Though the purposes and ends of the great God are far above our reach; yet we may suppose God to have this wise design, in the creation and destruction of so many children, *viz.* to let those wicked parents, as well as their neighbours, see the constant evil of sin in the effects or punishment thereof, even of the sin of Adam, in the weaknesses, and pains, and death of their children; and to keep a lively image of these things always before the eyes of men, in the continual succession of so many visible agonies and dying groans and deaths of mankind in their youngest hours of life. This same design and effect is attained also by the mortality and deaths of all children, even those of pious parents, whose souls are carried to heaven by the covenant of grace, and the faith of their parents. God will have a continual sense of the evil of this original sin maintained in all the families of mankind, and this is a sufficient reason for his conduct.

Principle X. Let me now mention a second objection against this set of thoughts concerning infants; and that is, if the children of wicked parents do not rise from the dead, but are destroyed soul and body, as lying under the original sentence of death, will not this opinion tempt parents to be negligent of the lives of their infants? And some perhaps might be tempted to put them to death, that they may not grow up to sin, and thereby expose themselves to eternal misery. I answer,

Answer. That good persons cannot be guilty of this crime; for such wilful and inhuman murder would be a plain proof they had no true religion, nor goodness, nor interest in the covenant of grace: Nor can they have any such temptation if they walk according to this covenant, because the blessings in the covenant of grace are secured to their seed. As for wicked parents, they have so much natural love and concern for the welfare of their children in this life, and so little regard to any thing of a future world, that there is no great danger of this event. The ties of nature and parental affection in the men of the world are generally much stronger than any thing else that relates to another world. There are many of the wicked among men, who actually believe that children have no future state, and yet we do not find this temptation prevail.

But further, Can we suppose any person can be so mad and inconsistent as to fear the future uncertain danger of God's wrath for a child, if he has no fear of it for himself? Or will he run himself into certain present damnation, if he die under such an impious and inhuman sin of wilful murder, in order to secure a child from the future

uncertain danger of impenitence and damnation, that is, if it live to man's estate and grow wicked? This is so unnatural a temptation, especially to wicked parents who have little regard to future and eternal things, that if the representation which I have made of the case of infants, be agreeable to reason and Scripture, I think the danger of such a supposed possible inconvenience is so small, as is by no means sufficient to refute this scheme of thoughts, or to forbid the publication of it.

Principle XI. I should here also take notice that there is a third objection against my hypothesis; and that is, there have been some persons who suppose we have no need of this annihilating scheme, concerning the case of infants, to mollify the severity of it, since in their opinion, one half of the fifth chapter to the Romans represents our Lord Jesus Christ as removing entirely all the guilt of the sin of Adam from mankind, and that the misery and destruction that was brought on the race of mankind, by the fall of their first parents, is effectually cancelled and abolished by the obedience and death of the Son of God, excepting only their sickness and natural death of their bodies, which infants are subject to as well as grown persons. But to this I answer,

Answer. The design of that chapter is to shew, that God has laid as sufficient and solid a foundation in the obedience and death of Christ, for the recovery of men from the ruins of their nature, their guilt and misery, in and by the covenant of grace, as Adam had laid for the ruin and destruction of his posterity according to the covenant of works: But as none but the posterity of Adam are involved in his curse, so the blessing is only applied there to those who become the seed and posterity of Christ by faith and repentance, and by accepting the covenant of grace: For it is sufficiently evident from constant experience and observation, in opposition to this opinion, that sin, and pain, and death, which were brought in by the fall of Adam, still infect human nature in every son and daughter of man which comes into the world: And how can these evident consequents and legal penalties of sin continue among infants, if all the guilt and consequent effects of Adam's sin be taken away from them by the undertaking of Christ? Our daily and constant experience abundantly proves that this opinion of the universal and actual abolition of sin, and the curse brought in by Adam on his infant race, must be a mere mistake.

Principle XII. And if it should be said still, that this recovery of mankind from the curse by Jesus Christ, so far as it belongs to infants, chiefly refers to their future state after death, and that it ensures salvation universally to all who die in infancy; I might very well answer,

Answer I. That neither do the words of that place of Scripture, nor does its connection with the context discover this doctrine there; and I think it would be very hard to prove it without some clearer testimony of Scripture. Besides,

Answer II. If we consult the word of God from one end to the other of it, we shall find no blessing or curse coming upon children in their very infancy, but by the covenant, or conduct, or character of their parents. If the children of Adam die, they are doomed to death together with him; *Rom.* v. 12—21. If Abraham's seed are blessed, it is together with their father; *Gen.* xvii. 7—14. If the unbelieving Jews are the branches broken off from the good olive-tree, their little buds are broken off together with them; and if the believing Gentiles are grafted into it, their buds or tender offspring are grafted in together with them also; *Rom.* xi. 17—24. The Scripture gives us no account of God's dealing with children in their infancy, but as a part of

their parents, and considered as one with them. Now how shall the children of wicked men, according to the current of Scripture, be brought into this salvation by Christ, if their parents do not accept nor share in this salvation? In the third place,

Answer III. I would inquire whether this opinion that all infants are saved, doth not much more directly and abundantly expose children to the inconvenience of the foregoing objection, *viz.* by tempting wicked parents to send them to heaven, either by neglecting or destroying their lives upon earth, in order to convey them to certain happiness. A wicked man, or woman, who has never so many children, will be tempted upon this foot to say, why should I take any care of these children, let them come into the world as fast as they will, and let them die as fast as they come: there are so many more inhabitants of heaven; and why should I nurse them up in life merely to bring them into the danger of hell? Is not this a temptation much greater than that of sending them into non-existence?

Answer IV. I add in the last place, that if all children, dying in infancy, are certainly saved, what are the special privileges which are so often asserted in Scripture to belong to the children of pious parents, and the seed of Abraham, in having God to be their God? Does not this sufficiently intimate some superior favour to the children of good men, who have accepted the covenant of grace in Christ Jesus, above what is promised to the children of the wicked, who have broken the covenant of works, and who have no share in the blessings of the covenant of grace for themselves or their posterity, because they have not accepted of it? Has the offspring of the righteous no advantage of the wicked after all these gracious words of promise? I fear such an opinion does not bear a kind aspect on the faithfulness of God in his word, to represent and promise that as a peculiar kindness and grace to the children of good men, which equally belongs to all, even the most impious and wicked.

Upon the whole, the opinion of the salvation of all children, as it has no countenance from the Bible, so it has no foundation in the reason of things; and the scheme of the transactions of God with men, as represented in Scripture, appears much more consistent and uniform according to the hypothesis I have here proposed.

Yet if any of my readers are utterly averse to these sentiments, let them find out wherein I have run counter to the word of God. The Scripture brings down the infants of wicked parents to the grave, and leaves them there, and so do I: The Scripture has not provided any resurrection for them, neither can I do it. And, in matters of pure revelation, though we may propose an expedient to solve great difficulties, yet I would be always cautious of asserting what God has not revealed.

CONCLUSION;

OR, THE ADVANTAGES OF THIS WHOLE SCHEME.

Thus I have endeavoured to trace out, so far as my reason would assist me, what relief may be given to some of those doctrines of revelation which seem to have a harsh sound, or a painful and disagreeable appearance in them, and which might seem to lay any imputation upon the conduct of God and providence. It is and must be confessed

there are some difficulties which attend the doctrine of original sin and misery spreading over all the race of man, and the doctrine of the saving grace of God in Christ Jesus providing a way of recovery for a lost world, even for all that are willing to accept it, and yet at the same time securing some certain success to the undertaking of Christ in the salvation of "those whom the Father hath given him." And yet all these seem to be doctrines pretty plainly taught in the holy Scriptures: Nor are they mere opinions for speculation, but they have a great and important influence upon our practice.

If we are well persuaded of original sin, and that our natures are so corrupt and degenerate, we shall learn to lie humble before a God of majesty and holiness, which is the very first part of all our religion. We shall also be candid and meek and compassionate towards each other without pride or scorn, being all liable to the same mistakes and infirmities, the same passions and miseries, and being all involved in the same condemnation and degeneracy.

And if we shall find that the doctrine of the imputed sin of Adam is so far from being a difficulty or hardship in this article, that it is the only effectual way to solve the propagation of the universal corruption and misery of our natures, and to absolve the conduct of God from all blame, we shall raise no more murmuring cavils against the providence of God herein, but receive it in the light in which the Scripture seems to have represented it with all submission and silence. God is just, though man be sinful and miserable.

If we are made deeply sensible of our universal guilt and degeneracy in Adam, we shall thankfully rejoice in every discovery of divine mercy, and especially in the gospel of Jesus Christ, who is the second Adam, and the only appointed way of our salvation: We shall be more prepared to receive it with greater humility, gratitude, and joy, when we see our souls so utterly lost and undone in a state of nature: And we shall depend more entirely upon the grace of God the Father, and his Son Jesus, and the influences of the blessed Spirit, for every part of our restoration and recovery.

All the doctrines of the special grace of God, of the redemption of Christ, and of the sanctifying Spirit, lie much more easy and obvious before the eye, when we are made deeply sensible of our universal ruin and misery. That humble temper of soul which this doctrine requires, will more readily subdue all the rising cavils of the mind against the methods of saving mercy.

If we believe that the undertaking of Christ is secured of success, and that multitudes of souls shall certainly obtain this salvation, this is matter of thankfulness and hope, since all mankind lay in one common ruin: And we have encouragement to all diligence in the duties of repentance, faith, and new obedience, since "he that seeks shall find, and to him that knocks it shall be opened;" *Matt.* vii. 8; since this is the only way for us to obtain our share in the success of the labours and sufferings of Christ, and the blessings that are derived from them. And when we have found our own hearts sincerely and effectually turned to God by the gospel, and our natures and our lives formed unto holiness, we have then high encouragement to believe the security of our interest in the mediation of Christ and the salvation of the gospel, and to rejoice in hope.

And if we take with us also this comprehensive and compassionate doctrine of the sincere and extensive offers of mercy to every sinner, according to the degree of the discoveries of the grace of God in the age and nation wherein he lives, we shall acquire a more large, more generous and diffusive benevolence to all our fellow-creatures of the race of Adam: We shall give a large foundation for hope to every guilty creature among

mankind, assuring them that the great God hath debarred none from his mercy but those who debar themselves by impenitence and unbelief: We shall vindicate the goodness and justice of God in his dispensations towards men, and leave the final condemnation of wilful impenitents, and of all the wicked of the earth, entirely upon their own heads.

If it be inquired, what further advantages can be derived from so peculiar a doctrine as this last section contains, *viz.* " that the children of unregenerate or unholy parents, who never lived to do good or evil, and died only under the guilt of Adam's sin, have sustained their whole penalty at death, and will never be raised to life again?" I answer, in these three particulars:

Answer I. Hereby the conduct of divine providence, with regard to the millions of infant creatures in all the numerous nations of the earth, will be justified from the severe censures which have been cast upon it by men, in accusing the doctrine of original sin: For if they suffer nothing but temporal death, as being fallen in Adam their head, all these terrors of pretended cruelty and severity will vanish, while it appears that eternal damnation belongs only to those who have been guilty of actual transgression in their own persons; for there is not one word in all the Scripture concerning eternal misery inflicted upon any person merely for the sin of Adam.

Answer II. This hypothesis not only absolves the providence of God from supposed cruelty, but perhaps it represents it as good and gracious towards far the greatest part of those that are born of Adam; while they are not suffered to live and grow up amidst the temptations of this world, and under their present corrupt principles of nature, but are precluded from rendering themselves more miserable, by being cut off in infancy, and never having it in their power to do good or evil themselves.

Answer III. This scheme relieves the difficulties which sometimes have been cast upon the laws or orders of God given the jewish nation, to cut off so many thousand children of the Canaanites, when they entered into the promised land: For hereby these children are subjected only to temporal death as the consequent and penalty of Adam's sin, and are, if I may so express it, secured from eternal misery, by being prevented from growing up to imitate the iniquities of their fathers, and to expose themselves to God's eternal judgment and damnation.

If some person should again object, why then may not men slay their own infants or any other children out of kindness, to prevent them growing up to commit actual sins, and exposing themselves to a resurrection and judgment and everlasting misery? I answer, these two ways:

Answer I. Because this is directly contrary to the moral law whereby God hath appointed to govern man, *viz. Thou shalt not kill;* and the laws of men, as well as the law of God, almost universally forbid all murder of the human race, and require blood for blood. It is God's prerogative to cut off by death whom he pleases, but he hath not given this prerogative to man, nor will he break in upon the grand rule of his government of this world, so far as to give this piece of sovereignty out of his own hand.

Answer II. Because if men might slay any children at their own pleasure, they might slay some who would have grown up to virtue and religion, and then this infant-murder would cut these children off from future and eternal happiness, which would have been very unjust, and which God will never permit.

Upon the whole it is evident, that the Scripture having never in any text that I can

find foretold the resurrection or judgment of the infants of sinful parents, and having pronounced the word *death* only, as the penalty of Adam's sin or their interest in it, and denounced the final judgment and eternal misery only against actual sinners; there is abundant reason to believe that God has knowingly and wisely appointed and ordered all these things, so that his providence might be secure from all charges of cruelty and injustice: And perhaps this hypothesis which I have here proposed, is nothing else but these very appointments and transactions of God set in their proper scriptural light to guard his providence from censure.

If I have failed in these attempts, let it be remembered that all the new or peculiar sentiments which are found here, are merely offered to the world as probable conjectures drawn from reason and Scripture, to relieve the difficulties which seem to hang on revealed truths. If the method proposed is not sufficient for this purpose, I shall rejoice to see better solutions of them given, and to behold them set in a fairer light. Where I have laboured to follow the track of reason, it hath only been in order to do more abundant honour to divine revelation, to which I entirely submit my faith and practice; and I solemnly renounce whatsoever is inconsistent with it, for that cannot be right reason.

And let us remember also, that if all our attempts of this kind should fail, yet we may rest assured of this, that God is ever wise and righteous and good, that all his transactions with men, how intricate and repugnant soever they may seem to us, are highly consistent in his own view, and harmonize with all his own perfections: We may be assured that we are sinful and unhappy creatures in ourselves, that there is an all-sufficient salvation provided through Jesus Christ the Son of God, and that every one shall certainly be a joyful partaker of it, who follows the appointed methods of divine grace. True repentance and a sincere return to God, with faith in his mercy, so far as it is discovered to men under every dispensation, and a persevering life of holiness in the love of God and our neighbour, shall not fail of being crowned at last with the favour of God and eternal life through the mediation of Jesus Christ our Lord: And whatsoever clouds of ignorance and darkness may continue to surround us here, while we are studying the mysteries of grace or providence, yet we shall see things hereafter in a divine light, where all difficulties and darkness shall vanish for ever.

THREE ESSAYS

ADDED BY WAY OF

APPENDIX;

WHEREIN ARE CONTAINED

SOME PLAIN REPRESENTATIONS OF IMPORTANT POINTS

RELATING TO

THE FOREGOING QUESTIONS.

I. A DEBATE, WHETHER THE PRESENT MISERIES OF MAN, WHEN CONSIDERED ALONE, AND DISTINCT FROM HIS SINS, WILL PROVE HIS EARLY APOSTACY FROM GOD?

II. A PLAIN AND EASY EXPLICATION OF THE DOCTRINE OF IMPUTED SIN AND IMPUTED RIGHTEOUSNESS.

III. ON THE GUILT AND DEFILEMENT OF SIN, AND HOW FAR THEY MAY BE TRANSFERRED TO OTHERS.

ESSAY I.

A DEBATE, WHETHER THE PRESENT MISERIES OF MAN ALONE WILL PROVE HIS APOSTACY FROM GOD?

SECTION I.

THE FOLLIES AND MISERIES OF MANKIND IN A GENERAL SURVEY.

THE miseries and follies of the creature, man, have been an ancient and endless subject of declamation among the writers of the heathen world, as well as among Christians. A just survey of human nature, from its entrance into life, till its retirement from this visible world behind the curtain of death, would furnish us with abundant matter of sorrow and complaint; and we should be ready to say concerning man, "Is this the creature that is so superior to the rest of the inhabitants of this globe, as to require such peculiar care of the Creator in forming him? Is this the animal furnished with such transcendent powers of thought and reason, whereby he is said to be exalted above brute animals? Does he deserve such an illustrious description as Ovid gives of him, after he had described the formation of beasts, birds, and fishes?"

"Sanctius his animal, mentisque capacius altæ
Deerat adhuc, et quod dominari in cætera posset,
Natus homo est. Sive hunc divino semine cretum
Ille opifex rerum, mundi melioris origo,
Finxit in effigiem moderantûm cuncta deorum:
Pronaque cum spectent animalia cætera terram
Os homini sublime dedit, cœlumque tueri
Jussit, et erectos ad sidera tollere vultus."

THUS IN ENGLISH:

"A creature of a more exalted kind
Was wanting yet, and then was man design'd;
Conscious of thought, of more capacious breast,
For empire form'd, and fit to rule the rest.
Whether with particles of heavenly fire
The God of nature did his soul inspire,
And borrowing from our earth, on that blest day,
Our new-made earth, a better sort of clay,
And moulding up the mass in shape like ours,
Form'd a bright image of th' all-ruling powers.
Whilst all the mute creation downwards bend
Their sight, and to their earthy mother tend,
Man looks aloft; and with erected eyes
Beholds his own hereditary skies."

One would almost imagine this heathen poet had read the account which Moses the jewish historian gives of the original formation of man; Gen. i. 26, *And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish, and the fowl, and the cattle.* And chapter ii. 7, *And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.*

If man was formed in the image of God, certainly he was a holy and a happy being; but what is there like holiness or happiness now found running through the rank of creatures that is called by the name of MAN? Are there any of the brutal kind that do not more regularly answer the design of their creation, and act more agreeably to their nature, than this illustrious thing, MAN, that was made to govern them all? Are there any of the brutes of the land, the water, or the air, that we ever find acting so much below their original character as mankind does? And are there any tribes amongst them, through which pain, vexation, and misery are so plentifully distributed as among the sons and daughters of the first man?

This globe of earth, if it were to be surveyed by some spirit, some immortal being of the superior regions, and ransacked through all the dimensions and corners of it which are inhabited by our species of creatures, it would be found such a theatre of folly and madness, such a maze of mingled vice and misery, as would move the compassion of his refined nature to a painful degree, and almost sink it into sympathy and sorrow, if it were not tempered and restrained by a clear sight of the just and wise conduct of providence, in permitting all this mischief. But if all these wide and dismal scenes could be grasped in one view, by any mortal of a tender and compassionate make, perhaps it would agonize his better powers into confusion and frenzy. Should the poets or philosophers form a just idea of it, as far as our common capacities extend, there would be criminal and absurd matter enough to furnish a Horace or a Juvenal with a thousand jests and sarcasms on their own species, or rather with a thousand full satires. There would be follies enough to shake the lungs of a thousand Democrituses with endless laughter, and there would be miseries enough to raise a fountain of tears for each single Heraclitus, if such a one had lived in every city of the universe, and in every age of man since the first creation.

SECTION II.

A PARTICULAR VIEW OF THE MISERIES OF MAN.

But we will lay aside the sins and follies of mankind, and only take his miseries into our present view; let us see whether from them alone we cannot infer, that we are a very degenerate race of beings, with most evident marks of the displeasure of our Maker upon us, and under the punishment of the wise and righteous Governor of all things?*

Let us take a turn amongst the historians of the world; and what is almost all history but a description of the wretchedness of mankind, under the mischiefs they bring upon themselves, and the judgments of the great God? The scenes of happiness and peace

* I hope the reader will forgive a short repetition of some of the same thoughts which may be found under the First Question in this book; for it was hardly possible to avoid them; especially considering, that these two Discourses were written with a distinct view, and were not at first designed to be published in the same book.

are very thin set among all the nations, and they have had rather a transient glimpse of these bright scenes here and there appearing and vanishing, than any pretences to durable felicity. Let us spread our thoughts over the universe: What public desolations by plague and famine, by storms and earthquakes, by wars and pestilence, which strike and affect our ears continually! Even the report is terrible. What secret mischiefs reign among men, which pierce into the soul, and corrode the vitals of nature! What smarting wounds and bruises, what lingering diseases, attack and torment the animal frame!

Surely those who sustain these maladies would not suppose our great poet had exaggerated matters when he describes them thus, as set before Adam our forefather by the angel Raphael:

"A lazar-house it seemed, wherein were laid
Numbers of all diseas'd, all maladies
Of ghastly spasm, or racking torture, qualms
Of heart-sick agony, all feverous kinds,
Convulsions, epilepsies, fierce catarrhs,
Intestine stone and ulcer, colic pangs,
Demoniac frenzy, moaping melancholy,
And moon-struck madness, pining atrophy,
Consumption, and wide-wasting pestilence,
Dropsics, and asthmas, and joint-racking rheums:
Dire was the tossing, deep the groans, despair
Tended the sick, busy from couch to couch;
And over them triumphant death his dart
Shook, but delay'd to strike, though oft invok'd."

But lazar-houses are not the only places whereby we may judge of the numbers of the wretched. Where is the family, if there are seven or eight persons in it, wherein there is not one or other of them afflicted with some troublesome malady, or some tiresome weakness or inconvenience? These indeed are oftentimes wisely concealed by the persons who suffer them, and by the families where they dwell. But these are the miseries which are discovered, in a glaring light, in the hospitals, the infirmaries, and the bedlams, which are provided by the public for the poor: And if we were to walk round a nation, we should find perhaps that in every twenty or thirty households, there were some afflicted and miserable creatures, that would be fit company for these public monuments of unhappiness, if their private circumstances did not extend to make provision for their support and relief; and in the whole, they would be enough to make half a province in a nation, rather than a town or a village.

Let us proceed a little in this inquiry. What toils and hardships, what dangers and deaths, what inward anxieties and sorrows, disappointments and calamities, are diffused and scattered through every age and country of mankind! Do not the rich feel them as well as the poor, and the prince together with the peasant? Are they not all teazed with their own restless and tormenting appetites, which are never satisfied, but are still returning upon them, and their impetuous passions give them no rest? What keen anguish of mind arises from pride, and envy, and resentment! What tortures and racking disquietudes do disappointments in ambition, or love, and wild jealousy, infuse into the bosoms of the rich, while the poor, together with these same inward vexations and corroding maladies of the mind, sustain also endless drudgeries in procuring their

daily and common subsistence! And how are many of them half starved in their sorry cottages, or fed and nourished at a miserable rate!

Let us survey this sorry creature, man, through every stage: First, mark what a wretched figure he makes at his entrance into life. "This animal," says Pliny, "who is to govern the rest of creatures round him, how he lies bound hand and foot, all in tears, and begins his life in misery and punishment; and for this only reason, because he is born." Thus, that Roman author, in his preface to one of his writings.

If we trace the education of the human race, from the cradle to the state of mature age, and especially among the poor, which are the bulk of all nations, the wretchedness of mankind will appear still in a mournful light. How are they dragged up in their tender age in Europe, Asia, Africa, and America, through a long train of nonsense, madness, and miseries! What millions of uneasy sensations doth their infancy and childhood endure, by reason of those pains and pressing necessities, which in their youngest years they can tell only in cries and groans, and which their parents in extreme poverty cannot relieve, or they are so brutish and savage that they will not do it! How wretchedly are these young generations hurried onward through the folly and weakness of childhood, under these miseries, till the addition of new calamities, from their own crimes and madnesses, their ungoverned appetites and passions, swells the load to a huge and painful degree! They practise what they have seen with their fathers, and are plunged into early mischief.

As youth advances, the ferments of the blood rise higher, and the appetites and the passions become much stronger, and give more abundant vexation to the race of mankind, than they do to any of the young brutal creation, whether in air, earth, or sea. Their natural appetites are abundantly relieved and satisfied without those vexing cares, anxieties, and inconveniencies, which beset mankind of both sexes in the same part of life. The same desires and inclinations which belong to the rest of the animal kind, attack the human race also, but with greater rage and violence, and seem to demand their present gratification: And that, as has been observed by moralists, not at one season of the year only, but at all seasons, with more constancy than in other creatures, and give the younger crowds of mankind many more disturbances.

The all-wise God the Creator, for just and kind designs and reasons, has limited the gratification of these appetites by rules of virtue and piety: But perhaps these very rules and confinements, however holy, just, and good, have served very much, through the corruption of our nature, to irritate and provoke mankind to greater excesses, and pursue their vitiated animal inclinations with warmer violence, than ever man would have been exposed to in the days of innocence. So the heathen writers confess: *Nitimur in vetitum semper, cupimusque negata:* "We are ever desiring forbidden things, and press after unlawful delights." So St. Paul acknowledges; Rom. vii. 8, *Sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence.* So a wild young bull or a lion would beat themselves against the grates and restraining bars of their prison, and make more furious assaults there to gain their full freedom. And in the midst of these distracting circumstances of mankind, between the law of God and their own appetites, they lead sometimes but a miserable and most unquiet life.

If their inclinations are gratified in an unlawful manner, what anguish of conscience, what inward vexations and keen reflections of mind perpetually haunt and torment them! What terrible and pressing temptations assault them to conceal their shame, by

the murder of themselves, or the harmless babes to whom they gave birth and life! How shameful and hateful are the scenes of life into which they bring their wretched offspring! How innumerable and grievous the inconveniences which they entail upon their young spurious descendants! What lasting reproach and distress, with beggary and long sorrow!

Or, if they pursue their desires in a lawful manner, how unhappy are the bulk of the extreme poor! And yet how many thousands are there that are but just capable of providing food and raiment for themselves in the world, who, after some conflict with these restless inclinations, rush into the connubial state and misery at once! How unable are they to provide the same necessaries for a young nursery of mortals, a new increasing generation! What endless solicitudes, night and day, afflict them in their contrivances to support themselves and their infant brood! And what a length of years is it before these young helpless creatures can possibly release their parents from this care and anxiety, and are capable of providing food and raiment for themselves! Would the affairs of human life in infancy, childhood, and youth, have ever been constituted in such a sore and painful situation, if man had been such a being as God at first made him; and if he had always stood obedient to his Maker, and continued in his favour? Could divine wisdom and goodness admit of these scenes, if there had not been some great and universal degeneracy spread over all the race, which, by the wise and righteous permission of God, exerts itself some way or other in every stage of life?

If we follow this track which mankind treads to the perfection of manhood, the age of public appearance and activity upon the stage of the world, what shall we find there but infinite cares, labours, and toil, attended with fond hopes almost always frustrated, warm wishes scarce ever fulfilled, endless crosses and disappointments, through ten thousand accidents that are every moment flying across this mortal stage; and whatever their pursuits be, whether honour or wealth, ease or pleasure, some intervening incidents or oppositions blast all their designs, and plunge them into long vexation. As for the poor, who have no such pursuits, but seek their bread from day to day, how does the sultry toil exhaust their lives in summer, and what pinching starving wretchedness do they feel among wintry snows and storms! How is a miserable and distressed life sustained among all the fatigues and pains of nature, the oppression, cruelty, and scorn of the rich, and their own inbred maladies both of body and mind! as I said before.

Let us follow on the track of this sorry life, and enter into the scenes of old and decrepid age; how innumerable and how inexpressible are the disasters and sorrows, the groans and aches, the pains and wretchednesses that spring up every where to meet this poor long-lived animal on the borders of the grave, before they plunge him into it!

And indeed is there any person upon earth, high or low, without such distresses and difficulties, such crossing accidents and perplexing cares, such troubles, such painful infirmities, such disquieting fears, anxieties and sorrows, in some or other stage of life, as must pronounce mankind upon the whole a miserable being? Whatsoever scenes of happiness seem to attend him in any shining hour, there is a dark cloud that suddenly casts a gloom over them, and the pleasing vision vanishes as a dream.

And after all these sufferings of real sorrow, and these painted delusions of joy, how constant is the tyranny of death in its ravages, through our whole race! How

formidable and painful are the avenues to his dark dominion! How full of terror and darkness, of thorns and briers, and of extreme anguish, is our descent to the grave! The distresses and miseries of our course through this life, as well as the entrance into it and the departure out of it, are so numerous and so mournful among all our race, that we can only say, he is the happiest of men who has the fewest of them: But even the fewest miseries that any man has, if put into an equal balance, perhaps would outweigh all the real and solid comforts of his present life put together, if it were utterly abstracted from all future hopes. And does mankind now look like a creature in favour with his Maker? Or has he not rather evident marks upon him of the great displeasure of the God that created him?

Perhaps some will cry out here, in direct opposition to this sentiment, that notwithstanding all these scenes of misery which are opened and spread abroad in the world, yet still the greatest part of men live comfortably enough, and with tolerable satisfaction, according to the condition and rank of their natures on this globe of earth. Are there not a thousand delights and satisfactions still found among mankind in every age and nation? How sweet and relishing are the pleasures of daily food to satisfy appetite, and to repair nature, and all the rich variety of fruits to refresh us, and of drinks to quench our thirst! Is it not sweet sleep that renews our vigour, and gives ease to our weary limbs and spirits? What is the delightful conversation of friends, and the mutual blessings of love and friendship, of advice, comfort, and assistance from our natural kindred and our neighbours! Do not these render human life among the bulk of mankind tolerable and easy, if not a chosen and a desirable good?

In answer to this: Let us inquire a little, what are these boasted pleasures which are supposed to recompense the sorrows of life, and give the balance to happiness in this present state? Are they not most of them owing to some previous pain or uneasiness? It is the pain of hunger and thirst that makes food and drink so relishing: It is the pain of weariness or grief that renders sleep so refreshing. And as for the blessings of love and friendship, among neighbours and kindred, &c. do they not very often, and for the most part, produce as much or more vexing disquietude than they do satisfaction and peace? I mean, they produce these evils, not in and of themselves, and by the original nature of things, but by reason of the endless humours and follies, the errors and passions of sinful fallen mankind, who enjoy and abuse these blessings.

Again, are not a very great part of these pleasures owing to such an indulgence of appetites and sensible satisfactions, which by the corrupt and evil bias of our natures become dangerous and fatal temptations to draw us into guilt and folly, into intemperance and shame, into painful anguish of conscience and bitter self-reflection? And do not these very pleasures of the body prove the ruin of ten thousand souls? These pleasures might be used indeed with innocence and wisdom; but the unruly and vicious appetites and passions of men turn these sensual delights more frequently into a curse, which God in his original creation designed for blessings: I say, God the Creator at first designed them so; but if you take them now with all these unhappy temptations, these powerful and mischievous influences, which by the folly and guilt of man are attached to them, they do not much look like the pleasures provided by a God for his innocent creature, man: Scarce can they be called absolutely blessings, unless our

natures were better suited to make use of them without such perpetual and prevailing danger and guilt.

Think again, how short and transient are the pleasures of life in comparison of the pains of it! How vanishing the sweetest sensations of delight! And in many families and persons, how long and durable the days, the months, the years of fatigue or pain, or bitter sorrow! How small is the proportion of sensible pleasure to that of trouble, or pain, or uneasiness! And how far is it over-balanced by the maladies or miseries, the fears or sorrows of life, among the greatest part of mankind!

And as for intellectual pleasures, how very few are there in this world who take satisfaction in them! And among those few, how many contentions and quarrels! How many crossing objections, bewildered inquiries, unhappy mistakes and errors, as well as fatigues and vexations, are mingled even with intellectual enjoyments here on earth! *He that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow*, saith the wisest of men, *Eccles.* i. 18; and upon the whole computation he calls it, *vanity and vexation of spirit;* chapter ii. 17.

And if we should add to all these evils, this most unhappy circumstance, which belongs to every natural man who grows up in this world, *viz.* the great hazard of his living in sin and rebellion against his Maker in the world, and of being sent down to long misery, as a just punishment for it in another; this seems to increase the wretched condition of mankind in this present state to such a degree, that words cannot express it, nor heart conceive. Say now, does mankind, coming into the world in this view, look like an innocent tribe of creatures, or in the original state of favour with their Maker?

To talk of solid comfort and satisfaction, and real happiness to be enjoyed in this life, is contrary to all the common sense and experience of almost every thoughtful man who has taken a just survey of these numerous scenes of evil. Sorry satisfaction indeed, and poor comfort in the midst of such superior miseries!

If a man were placed in some upper region, and had the wisdom of an angel, with all that just knowledge and experience what true happiness is, and could look down from above, and take a complete survey of human life, even in its best circumstances, as things now stand, and as it is supposed to be enjoyed by some of the happiest men on earth, without the hopes of a better life afterwards, he would be very loath to accept of it; nor indeed would it be worth his acceptance.

Is there an angel in heaven who would not rather choose to lose his existence at once, than to be sent into our world, and trace the round of twenty, or thirty, or threescore years of human life, without any hereafter? And indeed, were it not from a principle of obedience to God, and from the hopes of a happy futurity, after we have piously and honourably sustained the labours, miseries, and trials of this life, I know not what wise man would willingly come into these tiresome scenes of mortality, or go through them with any patience.

What! To be trained up from infancy, under so many necessary follies, unavoidable prejudices, and wretched delusions, through the power of flesh and sense! To be sunk into such gross ignorance both of our souls, our better selves, and of the glorious Being that made us! To lie under such heavy shades of darkness, such a world of mistakes and errors as are mingled with our little faint glimpses, and low notices of God our

Creator! What! To be so far distant from God, and endure such a long estrangement and utter absence from the wisest and best of beings, in this foolish and fleshly state, with so few and slender communications with or from him!

What! To be in bondage to so many powerful and disquieting appetites, so many restless and unruly passions, which want the perpetual guard of a jealous eye, and a strong restraint over them, and which will be ever breaking out into some new mischief, notwithstanding our everlasting watchfulness!

What! To be ever surrounded with such sort of dangerous delights of sense, which though they were much safer in the innocent state, yet are now constant and strong temptations to folly, guilt, and misery! To have scarce any joys but what are closely attended with huge dangers! To have no satisfactions but what we are liable to pay dear for by excessive or irregular indulgence, and which are most likely to become the means of transgression and lasting anguish, either to the mind, or the body, or both! Can this be a desirable state for any wise or angelic being, who knows what happiness is, to be joined to such a body as ours, to be united to such a disorderly machine of flesh and blood, with all its uneasy and unruly ferments?

These which I now mentioned are indwelling mischiefs, which teaze and defile the soul: But there is another train of inbred miseries which affect this sensible nature of ours, this animal frame, with huge agonies and distresses. What wise spirit would willingly put on such flesh and blood as ours is, with all the springs of malady and pain, anguish and disease in it? What! To be in danger continually of the racking disquietudes of gout and stone, and all the distempers I cited from Milton's poem! What! To have nature worn out by slow and long aches and infirmities, and lie lingering for many years on the borders of death, before we can find a grave!

And besides all these inbred evils, to be ever exposed to those innumerable grievances which come from abroad! What! To be ever subject to the common dangers, to the numberless casualties and injuries of nature, to the infinite bruises of the flesh, and mischiefs which attend and afflict this mortal life, and to bear the endless inconveniencies of the changing seasons, frosts and storms, and sultry sun-beams in this elementary world, and which more than half of mankind are exposed to, even with little or no relief! What! To be subject to the frequent insults of injustice, to the frauds of the crafty, the violence of the great, and the reproaches and oppressions of evil neighbours, to endure the private bickerings and domestic quarrels of families, the feuds and resentments, and teazing vexations of kindred, with tormenting jealousies and uneasinesses among nearest friends! To be ever disturbed with the hurry, buzz, and confusion of real and pretended men of business, and to lie open to the follies, weaknesses, and impertinences of those we must daily converse with! Add to this the terrors and tears of infancy, the ridiculous humours, the silly vexations, and the real sorrows of childhood, with all the snares and mischiefs that attend our youth, the laborious and uneasy toils of acquiring any knowledge, and fulfilling the necessary employments of life in our young and vigorous years, and the rubbing through long successions and cares, both personal and public, with all the private teazing uneasinesses which arise from family and domestic concerns in a manly state.

Go on with these trains of wretchedness, the grievous occurrences and disasters, the intemperance and succeeding indispositions to which at all ages we are continually liable, the risks and hazards we must sometimes run, both of health, and ease, and

safety, in procuring the necessaries of life, the constant decays of manly vigour, amidst the infirmities and the aches of old age, the pangs of dissolving nature, and the agonies of death: I say, upon a complete survey of all these hardships which the wisest and best of men cannot escape, I hardly think there is one spirit in heaven, or one man of equal wisdom, if such were found on earth, that would accept of this life in its common circumstances, or even its most favourable appearances, if his existence were to terminate at death, and he had no respect or reference to a better life to come.

Solomon, that wise prince and philosopher, seems to be much of this mind, when, after a survey of the whole scheme of human life in its variety of scenes, without the views of hereafter, he declares that he *praised the dead which are already dead, more than the living which are yet alive: Yea,* saith he, *better is he than both they,* even he who *hath not been, and hath not seen the evil work that is done under the sun;* Eccles. iv. 2, 3*. And upon the comparison of things, I must confess myself of Solomon's mind; for it appears to me, that the calamities and miseries of life are so numerous, as to over-balance all its real comforts, and sufficiently shew that mankind, in its present state, is not its Maker's favourite, but lies under evident marks of his displeasure, on the account of some great and universal degeneracy from the innocence of that state wherein man was first created. Having drawn this inference from all the foregoing views of human life and circumstances, I would propose here, in their fullest light, the three strongest objections I ever met with, or that I could ever think of, against all these reasonings, and then endeavour to answer them.

SECTION III.

ANSWERS TO OBJECTIONS AGAINST THIS ARGUMENT.

I. THE first objection is this: Can mankind in general be called miserable creatures, when there is not one in a hundred of them but uses all his art and skill to preserve himself in this life, and continue his situation? Do not all mankind strive to secure their lives, and maintain their abode in this state, with all the supposed miseries of it? Now, must not every man judge for himself, whether he is happy or no? Surely he would not seek to continue his existence in misery: And therefore if the real sorrows of life were greater than the pleasures and satisfactions of it, every man would be glad to be rid of his life, which makes him capable of these sorrows? I answer, in the first place,

Answer I. That wheresoever any thing of a futnre state of rewards and punishments is known and believed, it is no wonder men are unwilling to die; for they being generally conscious of so much sin and guilt, cannot think themselves to have a certain claim to future happiness; and therefore when they die, they know or fear they must be exposed to the punishment which is prepared for criminals in another world. Their aversion therefore to death, and the fear of it, even though they are in a miserable state, arises not so much from any sense of present happiness, which they are loath to lose, as from a fear or suspicion of taking a dreadful leap in the dark into greater misery.

* That great man of antiquity, Cicero, is much of Solomon's opinion, when he asserts *humanam conditionem satis per se miseram esse,* in his *Discourse of Consolation;* and, in the same, he adds also, *non nasci longe optimum, nec in hos scopulos vitæ incidere.*

There are some of our English poets who have said very pertinent things on this occasion, and I have read the citations of them on this subject.

> "Distrust and darkness of a future state
> Make poor mankind so fearful of their fate,
> Death in itself is nothing: But we fear
> To be we know not what, we know not where."

And another thus:

> "Aye; but to die, and go we know not whither:
> ——————for this warm body to become
> A kneaded clod, and the delighted spirit
> To bathe in fiery floods, or to reside
> In thrilling ice:* or to be worse than worst
> Of those we fancy howling in long torment;
> This is too horrible——————
> The weariest and most loathed worldly life
> That pain, age, penury, and imprisonment
> Can lay on nature, it is a paradise
> To what we fear of death."

Again, in another place, the same writer says,

> "If by the sleep of death we could but end
> The heart-ache, and the thousand natural shocks
> That flesh is heir to; 'tis a consummation
> Devoutly to be wish'd.
> Oh! who could bear the whips and scorns o' the times,
> Th' oppressor's wrongs, the proud man's contumely,
> The insolence of office, and the spurns
> That patient merit of th' unworthy takes,
> With all the long calamities of life,
> When he himself might his quietus make
> With a bare bodkin? Who would bear such burdens,
> And groan and sweat under a weary life,
> But that the dread of something after death,
> That undiscover'd country from whose border
> No traveller returns, puzzles the will,
> And makes us rather bear those ills we have,
> Than fly to others which are all unknown?"†

And it is very evident daily that multitudes would put an end to their own life at once, if they were sure they could put an end to their souls and all their nature, and send themselves into annihilation and nothingness. It is this wise and dreadful guard which the blessed God has set against self-murder, this terrible and eternal curse of hell and damnation, which constrains many miserable creatures to endure the sorrows of this life, and powerfully withholds them from the destruction of themselves. Their many and wilful crimes and innumerable sins of which they are conscious, forbid their hopes of a happy hereafter, and therefore they rather choose to wear out life under their pre-

* The poet supposes these torments in the future state.

† This author, as we are told by the critics, was as well skilled in describing human nature as any writer whatsoever; and it is only in this view that I have cited his lines.

sent and painful burdens, than plunge into an eternity of unknown miseries. It is one of these the poet introduces, crying out pathetically,

> " O that the everlasting, had not fixt
> His cannon 'gainst self-murder!"

If you should tell me, the heathens have no knowledge of this heaven or this hell which christianity and the Bible acquaints us with, and yet they through many generations are fond of living and strive to continue long in this life, notwithstanding all the pretended miseries of it; I would cite some of the ancients, as well as modern travellers, to make a reply for me: They would tell us that there is scarce any part of the heathen world, where they have not some notions and fears of punishment in a future state for the sins committed in this life, and particularly in the more polite nations of heathenism, they tell us, how unhappy self-murderers are made in that unseen and future world. When Virgil has brought his hero into the world of ghosts, he particularly opens the scene before him,

> " Where Minos dooms the guilty souls.
> The next in place and punishment are they,
> Who prodigally throw their souls away.
> Fools, who repining at their wretched state,
> And loathing anxious life have hurried on their fate:
> With late repentance, now they would retrieve
> The bodies they forsook, and wish to live;
> Their pains and poverty desire to bear,
> To view the light of heav'n, and breathe the vital air:
> But fate forbids; The Stygian floods oppose;
> And, with nine circling streams, the captive souls enclose."

Thus you see the heathen writer makes this life miserable enough, though he shews their greater wretchedness and misery, who plunge themselves, at their own pleasure into the other world, in order to abolish and fly from the distresses of the present life. But in the second place, I answer:

Answer II. Suppose this aversion to death, and this love of life to be very universal over all the world, and that without regard to any future state; suppose that all mankind had rather continue in existence in the midst of all their calamities and plagues, than venture into non-existence, and cease to be; this will not prove that mankind is happy: For the God of nature, for wise ends, hath wrought this love of life into our flesh and blood originally, and mingled it with all animal natures whatsoever, in order to preserve the works of his hands; so that the love of life, or reluctance against dying, is owing to the strong mechanical and animal principles of self-preservation, without any formed and sedate judgment of reason, whether it be best to continue in life or no, or whether this life has more happiness or misery. I answer yet in the third place:

Answer III. That far the greatest part of mankind do not pass a true and just judgment on things, nor wisely balance the right value of them: All their faculties are engrossed, and their spirits, as it were intoxicated with present sensible things they enjoy and so they march onward in the ronnds of human life, without thinking; and therefore as painful, and as miserable as this state is, yet they cannot tell how to think of parting with it. They bear a thousand calamities rather than venture into non-existence. A club of drunken fellows in a prison, and in chains, who are to be scourged

once a day, yet they are still drinking and dancing and indulging their sport and merriment, thoughtless of the scourge; but can these men be called happy? or will any wise man assent to their judgment of their own state?

Perhaps it may be objected still, that in order to make up the quantity of happiness, and to judge aright of it; we must take in the temper of the person, as well as his circumstances of pain and pleasure. An indolent man may be happy with half the quantity of delights and relishing joys, which his gay and sprightly neighbour requires to his happiness. A hero may be happy under such loads of calamity, as would render a weak mind miserable. A vulgar and ignorant creature may be happy in the midst of such low and foolish delights, which would disgust the wise, and give them pain. The glutton and the drunkard rejoice in such a happiness as would be scorned and despised by a man of virtue and philosophy. Now if we consider the bulk of mankind of such tempers and tastes as they have, they must be said to be happy, if they enjoy the good they desire, though it be but a sorry good, or rather an evil in the opinion of the wise and rational: And on this account men generally do and will prefer life to death, and their existence here, such as it is, to non-existence, even though there should be no hereafter. In answer to this reply;

Answer. I must grant it in a great degree; but then I say that the common satisfactions and delights of this life, which the bulk of mankind call their happiness, are most of them of so low and degenerate a nature, and many of them so criminal, that it is a sad sign that the intelligent creature man must be fallen from the original excellence of his nature, from his best principles of wisdom, and from the favour of his God, before he can make himself happy in such enjoyments. Let it be called his happiness, if you will have it so, since he chooses it, and is loath to part with it; yet it is such a paltry happiness as no creature of reason would choose, if he stood in the complete original rectitude of his nature, in the image and the love of his Creator, and in the true exercise and vigour of his intellectual and reasoning powers. He must have lost these original glories before he can think himself happy in such toys and follies, amidst all the evils and calamities that attend this mortal state.

II. The second objection is this: If brutes suffer the same miseries, and yet they have never sinned, how can these miseries prove that man is an apostate or degenerate being? Do not all brute creatures, the beasts and birds, and the insects of the earth, lie continually subject to the same pains, calamities, accidents, diseases and death, which attend upon mankind? And did their progenitors sin and offend God, or have they themselves offended him? Do not the cow and the hind, and most of the four-footed mothers bring forth their young with extreme pain? Do not the bear and the lion, and the wolf, howl and roar for want of food, hunt and toil for their prey, and live sometimes in starving circumstances, pinched with keen hunger for whole days together? Is not the horse exposed to almost as many maladies as the man that rides it? And are not the creatures of this species extremely miserable under the wild and mad passions of their drivers? Survey the beasts of draught or of burden, under the furious scourges of the men that use them. What endless lashes they are exposed to, and what rude and pernicious strokes do they bear from any instrument within the reach of their enraged rulers, even while the laborious creatures are straining all their sinews, and even burst their nerves and their eye-balls in tugging at their unreasonable loads at the brow of a hill! And after a little food, whereby nature is refreshed, and a little sleep, wherein life is forgotten,

these wretched animals are called again to the team and harness to undergo their daily round of hardships and miseries! And have any of these creatures, or their ancestors, sinned against God? Are not the race of dogs ever snarling, quarrelling, and fighting? And surely everlasting brawls and battles are misery enough!

Again, are not the feebler creatures, both wild and tame, subject to the cruel and perpetual ravage of birds and beasts of prey? Do not these animals live by devouring one another, and tearing their flesh from their bones, ere they are quite dead, and this according to the very constitution of their natures? And even the milder fowls, who seem so innocent and harmless, the partridge, and the red-breast, and the chicken, do they not devour millions of insects, as their constant and appointed food? Are not the mangled bodies and limbs of the hare and the sheep, the dove and the thrush, subject to extreme pain when they are torn and bruised, and half eaten by the tiger and the wolf, the eagle and the hawk? And do not all those milder and gentler creatures occasion millions of painful sensations to the living insects which they prey upon, *viz.* the ants, and the flies, and the worms? And have any of these sinned against their Maker, or degenerated from the first laws of their creation?

Again, I would inquire, are not harmful and bloody accidents much more common among many of the brutes than they are amongst mankind? A horse stalking over an ant-hill shall crush a hundred of the busy inhabitants with his broad and heavy foot, lay a whole kingdom in desolation at once, and leave multitudes of their little members bruised and broken, and the tiny creatures expiring in anguish? And if their organs were strong enough to form a sound which could reach our ears, what shrill outcries and screams, what dying groans, what innumerable accents of misery would arise from this little mangled nation, and pierce the heart of a compassionate traveller on every such accident? And let me ask now, did these diminutive animals, these tiny atoms of being, ever offend the hand that formed them? Or are they in a worse state or condition than they were at first formed? Or are they liable to any new accidents which their original nature and constitution does not expose them to?

Yet further let us ask, do not sweeping storms and famine and pestilence sometimes make wretched havoc among whole nations of the brutal kind, and spread the fields and the woods with distress and desolation? And in fine, do not the distempers of nature which are found amongst them, or the length of years bring them all down to death, and sometimes with tedious agonies and convulsive pangs? And yet can we say that God is angry with them, or that they are under any worse circumstances of life than what God at first formed them for?

But let us pursue the detail of their miseries yet further. Doth not man destroy thousands of them continually for his own food, and that by divine appointment? Are not birds snared by the fowler in a mortal net, or shot in flocks with murdering gunpowder and engines of spreading destruction? And the rest which escape by flight, how painfully do many of them drag on a lingering life among wounds and bruises! Are not oysters churned alive between our teeth? Are not millions of living shell-fish boiled to death in caldrons, and finny animals in shoals taken out of the sea and rivers, and while leaping with life, they are fried in burning oil, or other scalding liquids? How many painful circumstances must some of these creatures necessarily pass through, even if we would catch and fit them for our food in the easiest manner! But generally their manner

of dying is more painful misery, and death is brought upon multitudes of the brute-creation, merely as they are the appointed support of men and other animals, besides all the other accidents, pains, and diseases, that attend them.

Now, notwithstanding all these miseries which are spread amongst the various brutal tribes in earth, air, and water, yet we suppose them still to pass all the days of their existence according to the rank of their beings, and the condition of nature which the wise and righteous Governor has assigned them. We look upon them all as innocent beings, for they are capable of no sin nor guilt, and therefore all these tortures and agonies which they sustain are no punishments; they having never done any thing to give offence to their Maker: And yet, says the objector, you must either allow these brutes to have sinned against their Creator, since he appoints or suffers so many calamities to attend them in the very course of nature, or else you must confess that mankind may sustain all the scenes of misery which are before described, without being under any peculiar displeasure of their Maker; and man, at least in his infancy and childhood, may be such a creature still as he came out of the hands of God, notwithstanding the vices he learns to practise as he grows up, and all these shapes of wretchedness which he is exposed to, and which are dressed up in this discourse into so formidable a spectacle.

I think I have spread out this objection in its complete force; and in order to answer it, I ask leave to propose the following considerations:

Consideration I. It has been the opinion of many divines that all these varieties of wretchedness came upon the brutal creation as a general curse for the sin of man, who was the chief inhabitant and lord of this lower world; and therefore these brute-creatures which were, as it were, his slaves, are punished together with him; so that they suppose the sin of man brought misery into all the ranks of this lower creation, as well as into his own kind.

But I must confess I never well approved of this solution of the difficulty; for though I know men may oftentimes, by their perverse wills, abuse these creatures of God, yet the continual calamities that they fall into by being the natural and appointed food of men and of one another, as well as by unhappy accidents, by injuring, wounding, or killing casualties, by diseases, old age, and death, are all ordained of God their Creator, as the God of nature, and in the common course of things, without any special reference to the sins of men, as the moral and procuring cause. I can hardly persuade myself that God made so many millions of sensible creatures so miserable, or would permit them to be so, who are in themselves perfectly sinless and innocent, and have no manner of proper relation to any sinful head or stock, such as the first man is justly supposed to be to his own species; of which we have discoursed elsewhere. I proceed therefore to the second consideration.

Consideration II. The Scripture on one hand gives us a plain account, "that man originally was not made to die, and that the death of mankind was brought in only by sin," *Rom.* v. 12; and all the evils that attend human nature are derived from the same spring; because man was wholly at his first formation in the likeness of God, who made him in the image of his holiness and his happiness, and designed him to live for ever, if he continued innocent; *Gen.* i. 26, and *chapter* ii. 17. But on the other hand, the Scripture teaches us that brutes originally are made to die, and wild beasts made to be taken and destroyed, partly for the natural food of man, and partly for his safety and ease; *Gen.* ix. 3. 2 *Peter* ii. 12.

Besides, it is evident to reason and constant observation, that brutes are appointed for food for each other, as flying insects for the spider, small birds for the hawk, and sheep for wolves and lions. Now this cannot be without wounds and bruises, and mortal convulsions, and death. It is manifest therefore, that we may infer guilt from the endless pains, calamities, and death of men, because Scripture reveals it as the original cause; but we cannot infer the same from the sicknesses, wounds, and deaths of brute-creatures, which are made by the God of nature for food to others, nor from all the appearances of pain and anguish which are found among the brutal creation: These must be solved therefore, and explained some other way.

Consideration III. The objection here supposes, that all the brutal creation have really the same acute sensations of anguish and pain as mankind, because many of them make use of the same sort of sounds and motions, groanings and howlings, and distortion of limbs, as we do when we are under acute pain. But it is hard to suppose that a righteous and merciful God should inflict such keen and extreme anguish upon millions of creatures whose race and generations are sinless, and perfectly innocent, and entirely such as they came out of his own hands; or that he should, in the course of nature, permit it to be inflicted, without any degree of sin or moral evil in any of them to deserve it.

And I think therefore it would be much more eligible and rational, with some modern philosophers, to suppose that brutes, being made of mere matter, have no proper sensations of pleasure or pain; or at least that all their sensations of pain are but feeble and dull, and very imperfect, notwithstanding all their hideous outcries and convulsions of their flesh; I say, it is more rational to think so, than it is to suppose that there is any such sharp agonizing anguish and keen torment as sinful men endure, provided by the blessed God for creatures which are perfectly innocent, and which have no relation to any guilt or crime.* Will a God of infinite equity and goodness inflict so much natural evil where there is no moral evil?

It is probable that the sheep, when he receives the mortal wound in his throat, feels as much pain as the swine, though the one is mute and silent, and the other sounds out his death with grievous shrieks and outcries: And perhaps if we had never seen nor heard any creature wounded or dying but a sheep or a fish, or an insect, who are mute, we should never have thought that the brutal sensations of pain were so keen, as those which human nature feels: Therefore if we judge merely by groans and clamours, we must suppose some creatures feel very little or no pain from their wounds and death; and yet why should the blessed God appoint so much less pain for the sheep than for the swine? Nor are the most grievous outcries and contortions of the flesh in other noisy animals a sufficient proof to our reason that they feel such sort of pain, or so

* If we were to consult reason and Scripture jointly on this head, would they not both incline us to believe, that brutal sensations are not quite the same, nor near so intense as the sensations of mankind? For Scripture, as well as reason, teaches us, that the very soul, and life, and supreme principle of action, in brutes, is their blood, *which goes downward to earth* when the brute dies. Solomon and Moses seem to agree in this sentiment with some later philosophers, *Lev.* xvii. 11, 14. *Eccles.* xii. 7. But the soul of man is of a noble original, a thinking spirit, proceeding immediately from God, and at death "ascending upward," or "returning to God who gave it." Now can we suppose that mere blood and flesh have any sensations or perceptions above the capacity of matter? Can they possibly have such intense and keen sensations as a spirit, a mind, a thinking immaterial power, akin to angels, but united to flesh and blood? Would the all-wise and righteous Creator form creatures capable of such intense torments, who are not, nor ever were, capable of offending him in the least instance?

intense as man does, and consequently we cannot make the same inference from their sufferings as we do from those of mankind.

Consideration IV. But supposing brutes have sensations of pain as sharp as ours, yet if they have a proportionable and equal quantity of sensations of pleasure through the course of their low life, then put these pains and pleasures of the brutal life into the balance, and the amount of them, in the whole, makes neither happiness nor misery; or perhaps their pleasing sensations exceed the painful; then they are happy; for misery is only found where the pain exceeds the pleasure in degree, or duration, or both; and that state is happiness, where, upon the whole survey, the pleasure exceeds the pain.

But in mankind it is pretty certain that their natural maladies, as well as the painful and afflictive accidents that attend most or all of them in this foolish and sinful world, far exceed the natural maladies or painful accidents which attend brute-creatures; for amongst them there is little or no intemperance to disorder their own natures; no wars to destroy millions of their fellows; no engines of cruelty and death among them to multiply the miseries of their own species; and upon the whole, it is evident enough that the pains, and sorrows, and evils, in almost every human life, greatly exceeds the joys or pleasures of it, and consequently render man in this world but a miserable creature.

Consideration V. Let us remember also, that brutes have no proper reflection on things past, but only a sensation of the present: Now man, besides all the pains of sense, has also the long and grievous uneasinesses that arise from remorse and anguish of mind, reflecting upon his own evil conduct in time past, and dismal presages and terrifying agonies, arising from the constant fear and expectation of what may come; so that as mankind is generally subject to more pains and weaknesses, more diseases and uneasinesses in the body, than brute-creatures; so the addition of uneasiness of mind, which arises from a long remembrance of, or reflection on past sorrows, are as it were, a new sensation of them; and agonies of conscience for past sins, are new misery; besides, the terrible forethought and expectation of future evils, whether in this life, or in the world to come, do very much increase the miseries of human nature beyond that of the brutal world, since they are supposed to have no reflection, no forethought. And it is not only the long and keen passion of remorse and sorrow, arising from past sins or moral evils, and of fear and dread from the prospect of future miseries, which makes mankind more unhappy than brutes, who have no such retrospects nor foresights to torment them; but every uneasy passion of human nature, even grief and sorrow for natural evils, wrath, envy, malice, rage, jealousy, disappointment, and despair, with all their dreadful train, are more keen and intense in the breast of man, make much deeper impressions on his heart, and sharper incisions into all the tender powers of his nature, than brutes ever know or feel: They last also much longer; they dwell upon the spirit for days, and months, and years; they mingle with the soul, and embitter every sweet of life.

Brutal passions, should we allow them to be as strong, yet they are much fewer, and more transient: The common calls of nature to eat or sleep, to sport or daily toil, abolishes the painful passion, the ill ferment subsides, the uneasiness vanishes, the cause of it is forgotten, and the creature is soon easy and happy again. But some of these uneasy passions of human nature cleave so close to the soul, that men cannot get rid of them; they sting like an adder, and prey upon the heart like a vulture, they teaze the

spirit day and night, they take away all appetite to food, and all the sweet relief and power of sleep. Was there ever an instance of a brute-animal whose passions ever wrought out such a scene of miseries for him as the unruly powers of mankind are daily working, and that not in one or two, but in multitudes of the human kind?

Upon all these views, I think it must be acknowledged, that the evils which mankind suffer in the present state, are much superior to those of brutes, and consequently, as they surmount all the pleasures of human life; so man must be pronounced miserable upon the balance of the whole; and therefore we must infer, that we of the human race cannot be in our Maker's esteem a race of guiltless beings, since our portion in general, in this life, is superior pain and wretchedness; and especially, since we find both by reason and Scripture, that whatsoever calamities and death attend brutes, these, for wise purposes, are appointed by the God of nature, though they are without sin, while the calamities and death of mankind are expressly attributed to sin in the word of God.

Objection III. If the miseries of all mankind, or even of the biggest part of them in this life, are so great as to over-balance all their comforts, so that a wise spirit would never willingly consent to be dressed in our flesh and blood, and be born into our present world; then we can have no reason to give God our Creator any thanks for our existence or life, since this is no blessing, and it would have been far "better for us never to have been born." Now is it possible that the great God should make a creature who has not reason or just cause to thank him for his being?

Answer. If any creature who comes into our world, hath more probability of being happy than of being miserable in this life; he has reason to bless God for his existence in proportion to the probability of his happiness: But if a creature has more probability of misery than happiness in life, I cannot see that life is any blessing or privilege; nor can I see how he can rationally bless or give thanks to the great God for it, considered in itself, and abstracted from a future state.

And I add yet further, if any creature who comes into this world has a greater probability of being foolish and sinful here, and miserable hereafter, than he has of being wise and holy here, and happy in the other world; neither then can he with reason bless God, or give thanks to the Author of his being, merely for his existence, or coming into life, in such a sinful wretched world.

Now since this is the case, that the bulk of "mankind are born to trouble and misery here," as *Job* v. 7, and as we have sufficiently shewn before; and if they are also most likely to run into sin and folly in this world, and misery in another, for almost *the whole world lies in wickedness*, 1 John v. 19, and there are *few who shall be saved*, Matt. vii. 14; this prospect certainly forbids our mere existence or entrance into such a life to be called a blessing; and consequently, we cannot give thanks merely on that account to the almighty Being that made us.

There has been indeed a bold and severe charge brought against this opinion, *viz.* "that it is a very high degree of ungodliness; that it greatly diminishes, if not totally excludes the goodness and mercy of God, and consequently forbids our gratitude, and discourages our hopes and trust."

Answer. It is a bold and grievous accusation indeed, but it wants all proof. Our Saviour himself has shewn us, that it is certain, "the bulk of mankind walk in the broad way to destruction, and but few find the gate of life;" *Matt.* vii. 13, 14. This alone is

sufficient ground to maintain a probability of persons in general, who come into this world, being miserable, rather than happy? And in this view how can mankind with reason give thanks to their Maker for mere existence, which in the present fallen state, exposes us rather to misery, than happiness? And the arguments which are used to oppose this opinion are so weak and ill-grounded, that I cheerfully leave them to the sense, reason, and conscience of every sincere reader to answer and refute them, though they are made a foundation for several unjust triumphs.

But if the case be so, whence comes this dreadful scene, this dismal situation of things, that an intelligent creature cannot thank God for creating him? Not from God the Creator, whose justice and goodness would never have suffered him to have created original beings as they came from his hands in such a situation as this: There must have been some dreadful ancient apostacy from God their Creator, some general degeneracy and curse of a broken law or covenant, under the spreading desolation whereof mankind come into this world; nor is there any other way that I can imagine or guess at, whereby the justice and goodness of God the Creator can be secured and vindicated from such hard imputations.

And though it is the blessed God that creates or forms fallen mankind from day to day, who come into such a situation, and such wretched circumstances, yet it is all according to such an original law of nature or divine constitution made for innocent man, which was holy, just, and good in itself. It is true the great God foresees that millions will now be miserable; and notwithstanding all this, his wisdom does not see fit to alter this constitution of things, for reasons which are unknown and unsearchable to us, and which will perhaps continue to be a secret until the great day of judgment. Till that comes we can but form probable conjectures.* But that great day shall reveal all the transactions of God with men, and set them in a glorious light, to the just vindication of all his own perfections, and the silence of all our cavils.

But observe, there are these three considerations which may serve to alleviate and moderate this dismal aspect and situation of things at present.

Consideration I. All mankind are justly required to adore and worship the great and glorious Being whose wisdom and goodness, as well as his power, shine bright in

* Suppose the great God had placed a man and woman in a certain inaccessible island, wherein there were herbs and roots of many kinds, but no sort of fruit, grain, or corn in it: And suppose he had given them a sufficiency of fruits and corn to support them for a year or two, and more, with a special command to sow some of it, and plant immediately, for the support of themselves and their posterity hereafter; and assured them also they should have many children. If this man and woman should eat up all their corn and fruit entirely, even that which they should have sown or planted for their future support; then they and their children in all following years would have been hard put to it to live upon coarse roots dug out of the ground, a poor and scanty supply, and that with much toil and labour: Now would it have been unjust with God to have left them and their children to their constant hard labour and hard fare, without giving them any new corn or fruit to plant or sow, or without providing better food for them? And suppose their children also neglected to cultivate and multiply the best roots they could find, and several of them in every age, fell into diseases and died by the badness or scarcity of their provisions, would the Creator lie under an imputation of injustice for continuing their existence under these disadvantages, and thus punishing their original rebellion and their daily negligence?

And suppose further, that this solitary and inaccessible island lay in the midst of many other islands in the sea, whose inhabitants are continually informed by some revelation or divine messenger of the original state and the present circumstances of this unhappy country, in order to restrain the rest from disobedience to their Maker and Lord in similar instances of any kind; might we not say, here is a just and valuable reason for which God should continue this island of rebels under their punishment? This may be applied in some measure to the forlorn case of mankind on this globe of earth, when compared with the many other planetary worlds, who may be preserved in their duty by being informed of our sad circumstances, though we know little of theirs. But, as I hinted before, these are but mere conjectural thoughts: It is only God himself in the great day of judgment can answer every difficulty, and scatter every darkness from all his works of providence.

the creation of this world, and in the formation of mankind, as well as all other animals who dwell upon the earth; they ought to admire and praise him on this account, though no reasonable creature can properly give thanks, but for some real benefit.

Consideration II. Every man who comes into this world, as considered in our common head and representative, Adam, in his state of innocence and trial, with full power to obey his Maker's law, and with far superior motives to obedience, hath good reason, even as Adam our father had, to thank God for his existence; for he was made in such circumstances, under Adam his head, which carried in them a much greater probability of standing and being happy, than of falling and being miserable.

Consideration III. Though the greatest part of mankind may not have sufficient reason to give thanks to God for their mere existence in this fallen state, yet all the sons and daughters of Adam have reason to praise the divine goodness for many favours they receive, *viz.* that they are not so miserable as they might have been by reason of their sins and follies, that they have any special satisfactions or comforts in life, and any lesser degrees of pain or sorrow than others sustain, or any relief for their own maladies and troubles: And especially if they are born and educated in a nation where the light of the gospel shines, they have further reason to acknowledge and bless the distinguishing goodness of their Creator, who has placed them within the nearer and easier reach of happiness, if their own evil inclinations and obstinacy do not withhold them from seeking after it. And,

Consideration IV. When any of the race of mankind are made sensible of their sins and misery, and by repentance and faith in the grace of God, so far as it is revealed to them, have arrived at any tolerable hopes of their interest in his favour, and their acceptance unto life and happiness in another world, then they are called aloud to bless their divine Creator, as well as their Saviour, and to give thanks to the God of nature and grace together. And I think there is not one place in Scripture where man is required to give thanks to the Lord, but on one or other of these accounts which I have here mentioned.*

Upon the whole, the result of things is this, that if any of us cannot, upon rational grounds, give thanks to God, as our Creator, for our existence, it is owing merely to our original apostacy from God, in and by our first parents; for otherwise God would never have made intelligent creatures, who could not reasonably thank him for making them.

And then further I add, if we cannot rationally thank God for our creation here, until we have some hope of his favour and grace hereafter, this should awaken us all with utmost diligence, in the midst of our miseries, to inquire after the way of salvation, and pursue every appointed duty that is necessary for this end: For then we shall be able to bless God for bringing us into being, and we shall no longer lie under such a sad and dismal reproach of nature, as not to give thanks for our existence to the hand that formed us.

Thus far I have endeavoured to prove, that by the miseries of mankind we may have sufficient evidence that they are in a fallen and degenerate state.

* There is no plain text that I can find where mankind is commanded or invited to thank God merely for their existence; and in those places where all nations, or all the earth, are called upon to bless the Lord, and give thanks to him, it is still in view of their having the knowledge, and grace, or salvation of God manifested in them.

SECTION IV.

A FULL PROOF OF MAN'S APOSTASY BY SCRIPTURE AND REASON, DERIVED FROM THEIR SINFULNESS.

But after all, if it should be found upon the justest survey and balance of things, that the miseries of human nature, considered alone, are not a sufficient and satisfactory evidence of the apostasy and fall of mankind from their Maker's favour, and of some remarkable displeasure of the hand that created them; yet I am well assured that the early corrupt inclinations, the endless iniquities and crimes of men from their childhood, and that universal propensity to sin which is found among all the inhabitants of our world, joined with the loads of misery they sustain, are both together an effectual and convincing argument that we are a degenerate and fallen race of creatures.

Now that we are such a sort of criminal, guilty, sinful, and degenerate beings, and wretchedly forsaken of God who made us, or fallen under his heavy displeasure even from the beginning of life, will evidently appear both from the express witness of Scripture concerning our sinfulness, from the necessity of renewing grace, and from the light of nature surveying the heathen world.

First, There are many representations in Scripture of some universal degeneracy and corruption that has come upon all the sons and daughters of Adam, and which have been largely supported by many writers who have explained these texts, *viz.* Gen. vi. 5, *Every imagination of the thoughts of the heart of man is only evil continually;* and *chapter* viii. 21, it is added, that it is *evil from his youth.* Psalm xiv. 3, *The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand and seek God: They are all gone aside; there is none that doeth good; no, not one.* Eccles. vii. 20, *There is not a just man upon the earth, who doeth good and sinneth not.* Isaiah liii. 6, *All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way.* Different wanderings, but all are wanderers. Rom. iii. 10, 12, *There is none righteous; no, not one: There is none that doeth good; no, not one.* Ver. 19, *Every mouth is stopped, and all the world become guilty before God.* And *ver.* 23, All are fallen *short of the glory of God,* because *all have sinned.** 2 Cor. v. 14, *We thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead,* that is, spiritually dead in trespasses and sins.

* If St. Paul had not used such strong expressions here, as plainly include every individual of mankind, yet his argument requires this sense; for otherwise there would be some who would not want the salvation of Christ; whereas it is his great design to prove, that all men are condemned by the law, and stand in need of this salvation, without any exception at all.

Objection. Some have asserted this law, which requires perfect obedience, and which condemns the sinner to death, to have been abrogated as soon as Adam sinned, and that another covenant, even the covenant of grace, was substituted and introduced, even before the sentence of death was pronounced upon Adam.

Answer. This objection has been often and effectually refuted; and it is very easy to shew, that the law by which all mankind are bound under condemnation, can never be said to be abrogated, while it holds men, or binds them under guilt and death: It is that law which now brings "indignation and wrath upon every soul that does amiss," *Rom.* ii. 9; that law which is "written in the heart of man by nature," *verse* 15; the same law which "whosoever offends in one point, is guilty of all," *James* ii. 10; that law by which is "the knowledge of sin, and by which no flesh shall be justified, for all have broken it," *Rom.* iii. 19, 20, 23; it is that law which "curseth every one who continueth not in all things there required," and from whose curse "Christ hath redeemed the Gentiles as well as the Jews," *Gal.* iii. 10, 11, 13. This is the original law of works.

And though all mankind may be said perhaps to be under the covenant of grace in those general proposals of repentance and trust in the divine mercy, which are made to fallen men by their own reasonings, or by divine revelation, yet

Now can we suppose that God would create such a world of beings, that every one of them coming out of his own hands in their original purity and innocence, should so universally break his law, run into sin and spiritual death, and naturally incline to practices which tend to defile and destroy themselves, and that without any one exception, if it had not arisen from some root of bitterness, some original iniquity, which diffused itself through all of them from their very birth or entrance into this world? Surely this universal corruption would incline any person to believe, either that God had not given to each of his creatures in their original formation a full and practical sufficiency to answer the demands of his law, and to preserve themselves from iniquity and guilt, or that it was lost in some hand or other. It is a strange and incredible thing to suppose that every single person among the millions of mankind should be born innocent and pure, with sufficient and practical powers of all kinds to fulfil the law of God and their duty, and that they should yet, by free and voluntary choice, every one for himself, for near six thousand years together, break his holy law, and rebel against him that made them, if there were not some original and universal contagion spread through them all at their entrance into life. See Question I. Section 7, at the end.

Secondly, I argue the same point from the scriptural doctrine of our recovery by divine grace. Let us consider in what manner the Scripture represents the necessity of a great and divine change to be made upon the souls of all men, in order to their recovery from the ruins of their nature, and to obtain the favour and image of God, and future happiness. John iii. 3, *Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God:* And in other Scriptures it is represented that they must be *born of the Spirit;* verses 6, 8. They must be *born of God;* John i. 13. They must be *created anew in Christ Jesus unto good works;* Ephes. ii. 10. They must be *quickened*, or be raised again from their death *in trespasses and sins;* Ephes. ii. 5. They must be *renewed in their Spirit*, or *created after* the image of *God in righteousness and true holiness;* Eph. iv. 23, 24. They must be *reconciled* to God *by Jesus Christ;* 2 Cor. v. 18, 19. They must be *washed from their sins in his blood;* 1 Cor. vi. 11. Rev. i. 5. And since *all have sinned and come short of the glory of God*, therefore if ever they are saved, they must be *justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God has set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood;* Rom. iii. 23—25. Now can any one suppose that God has made such a world of creatures as have come into being from Adam's time to our's, which have all entered into this world, pure, holy, and innocent in their original state, and yet that there should not one of them retain his image in holiness, nor be fit for his favour and the blessings of his love, without being *born again*, being *new-created*, being *raised from the dead*, being *redeemed by the blood of his own Son*, and being *washed* in so precious and divine a laver? Do not all these representations make it appear highly reasonable to conclude, that every man is born into this world with some original contagion about him, or under some early degeneracy and guilt, and criminal imputation in the sight of God? Is it not a most incredible thing that not one among all the millions of these creatures should be fit to be made partakers

none are freed from the curse and condemnation of the original broken law, but those who have accepted of this covenant of grace by sincere repentance and faith or trust in the mercy of God. Now this is but a very small part of mankind, for there are " few that shall be saved:" And till this covenant of grace is thus accepted, every son and daughter of Adam, of mature years, are condemned as actual sinners by this law. This law therefore stands in full force against all besides sincere penitents, and such as are justified by the gospel.

of his favour, without such amazing purifications as require the blood of the Son of God and the almighty operations of his blessed Spirit, to redeem and to new-create them, if they were born in their original purity? Do not all these things effectually teach us that mankind in their present generations, even from their birth, are not such creatures as God first made them?

But without entering into these arguments from Scripture, which represent the wretchedness of all mankind; I think we may evidently prove, in the third place,

III. That far the greatest part of the world are born under some sort of degenerate and guilty circumstances, by a mere survey of the heathen nations with the eye of reason, and by the light of nature.

A few days ago I was taking a view of the map of the world, and measuring with my eye the breadth and extent of the nations. I took a spreading survey of the vast asiatic empires of Tartary and China, and a great part of the kingdom of Mogul, with the multitude of islands in the East Indies; I went on to survey the large brutal countries of all the southern part of Africa, with the savage nations of the American world. I observed the thousands, or rather millions of mankind who dwell on this globe, and walk and trifle, and live and die there under the heaviest cloud of ignorance and darkness, who know not the true God, nor the way to his favour, who are drenched in gross impieties and superstitions, who are continually guilty of national immoralities, and practise idolatry, malice and lewdness, fraud and falsehood, with scarce any regret or restraint.

Then sighing within myself, I said, It is not many years since these were all infants, wretched helpless infants, without any knowledge of the things of God or man. The inhabitants of whole regions have been born and brought up under parents who know not the true God, nor are acquainted with the path that leads to life and happiness. Are not these unhappy children, said I, formed and born under difficulties almost insurmountable? Are they not laid almost under a moral impossibility of breaking their way of themselves, through so much darkness and error, to the knowledge, the fear, and the love of him who made them? Dreadful truth indeed; but so far as I can see, it seems to be certain and incontestible! Such, I fear, is the case of those of the human race, who at present cover a great part of this earthly globe, with very few exceptions.

Then I ran back in my thoughts four or five thousand years, and said within myself, What multitudes in every age of the world have been born in these deplorable circumstances, in the midst of idolatry and profaneness, sin and death! They are inured from their birth to barbarous customs and impious practices: They have an image of the life of brutes and devils wrought in them by their early education: They have had the seeds of many immoralities and wretched wickedness sown and planted, and cultivated in them by the rude and savage instructions of those who went before them; and their own imitation of such horrible examples has confirmed this mischief long before they knew or heard of the being of the true God, or the discoveries of his will, or their duty: And perhaps they have never heard it to this day. Scarce any of them have admitted of one thoughtful inquiry, whether they follow the rules of reason, or whether they are in the way of happiness and peace, any more than their parents before them; and as they are born in this gross darkness, they grow up through all the stages of life to practise these vile idolatries, and all the shameful abominations of their country, and they go on to death in the same course: Nor have they light enough from without to make

them plainly see their own folly and danger, nor have they had any probable workings of judgment or conscience within them strong enough to awaken them effectually to ask, "Is there not a lie in my right hand?" Am I not in the way of sin and destruction?

Then, after a length of years in such impieties and madness, such ignorance of the true God, and universal wickedness, they are plunged into the invisible world at death, without any evident or reasonable hope of divine favour in the other world, or at least at the utmost peril of his displeasure, and a dark and dismal uncertainty of the circumstances of that state into which they are delivered at the hour of death, or the resurrection.

St. Paul confirms all that I have said, who, by his long and frequent visits and sojournings among the heathen nations, well knew their temper and state, and he represents them to us as a most abominable herd of creatures, in several of his epistles; *Rom.* i. 21—31. Even the wise and the learned among them, the Greeks and the Romans, "changed the glory of the incorruptible God into the image of birds, beasts, and creeping things, and worshipped the creature more than the Creator. Their foolish heart was darkened:" They were justly abandoned of God, and "given up to work all uncleanness with greediness: They were filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, malice, &c. They were backbiters, haters of God, without understanding, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful." In *Ephes.* iv. 18, They were *alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their hearts.* In *Colos.* i. 21, They were "alienated from God, and enemies in their minds by wicked works."

It is true, we are told that there was so much of "the law of God written in their hearts, that their consciences bore witness to it," in some instances, and "their thoughts excused or accused them;" *Rom.* ii. 14, 15. But we seldom read of the return of any of them to sincere repentance of their wickedness, by the reproofs of conscience. St. John tells his disciples, that though they are of God, yet *the whole world lies in wickedness;* 1 John v. 19. And St. Paul again assures us, that "those who have sinned without any express knowledge or revelation of a law, shall perish without law." Doubtless their consciences, in the great day of judgment, will accuse them abundantly, and join with the sentence of God the Judge in condemning them, and will hardly be able to make just excuses for any of them; and therefore they are represented as "without God, without Christ, and without hope in the world;" *Ephes.* ii. 12. A dismal and deplorable state!

St. Peter says indeed, that *God is no respecter of persons*, that is, whether Jews or gentiles; *but, in every nation, he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, shall be accepted of him;* Acts x. 34, 35. But if there were very few among the Jews, who feared God, and wrought righteousness, very *few that shall be saved,* as our Saviour saith, *Matt.* vii. 14; if there are very few in these learned nations of the gentiles, that feared God or loved him; how much fewer may we suppose to find in the more barbarous countries, which have no knowledge of God nor godliness?*

* Though the case stands thus with the heathen world, yet there are, and there must be some grounds of a sufficient vindication of the equity and goodness of God, notwithstanding these scenes of wickedness and destruction among men: This has been made to appear, in some measure, by several writers, and particularly in the third and fourth conferences of a book, intitled, *The Strength and Weakness of Human Reason:* See Vol. II. page 319—404. And what the reasonings of men cannot fully solve and vindicate now, the great God will explain hereafter, and maintain the equity of his own conduct, to the conviction of all his intelligent creatures, men and angels. Amen.

What kind and gracious allowances the blessed God will make at last for such unhappy creatures, he has not revealed to us in his word.

Now, upon this survey of things, I cannot but inquire, would this have been the case of mankind in these wide and unhappy nations? Would these have been the wretched circumstances both of their young offspring and their advancing years, in a hundred long successions, if they had been such a race of creatures as they came out of the hand of their Creator, harmless and innocent? If the children had been esteemed, in the eye of God, as such undefiled, holy, and guiltless beings, as some men are ready to imagine, could this have been their portion? In short, can we suppose, that the wise, and righteous, and merciful Creator of the world, would have established and continued such a constitution for the propagation of mankind, which should naturally have led so many millions of them so early into such dismal circumstances and temptations of almost unavoidable iniquity? Or would the blessed God have ever thus treated whole nations of infants, who are the work of his hands, if there had not been some dreadful and universal degeneracy spread over them and their fathers, by some original crime, and which even met and seized them at their entrance into mortal life, according to some just and ancient constitution? And what constitution can this be, but the original covenant with Adam in innocence, and the spreading consequences of his sin?

But as I have insisted upon several of these things at large, under some of the first questions in this Treatise, I choose not to repeat them here; but I will only stay to answer three or four general objections.

Objection I. It is a most unreasonable and unrighteous thing, to impute the sin of one person to another, and to make the children and posterity of a sinner suffer any of the punishments which were due to the father's sin; therefore the righteous and holy God has never appointed any such constitution, nor can he do it.

Answer. It is evident that death was the punishment threatened to man for sin, while he stood in innocence, to deter him from it: It is evident again, from other Scriptures, that death is the actual wages or punishment of sin: It is plain also from universal experience, that death passes upon all men, even upon children, and a thousand other miseries of life attend them; and it is granted by many of those writers who oppose our doctrine, that these miseries and death come upon children by the means of the sin of their first father. Now I could never yet learn any fair and justifiable account, how such sickness and pain, misery and death, should come upon all mankind by means of the sin of Adam, if it be not in some sense imputed to them, even in the sense in which I have explained it in the Second Essay. Let those writers give a fair and rational account, how this can come to pass by such a constitution as I have represented.

It is not enough to say, that the just and righteous God appointed, or even permitted it, in order to bring about greater glory to himself, and greater blessedness to mankind, by the gospel of Christ, unless every one of those who suffer on the account of Adam's sin are made partakers of this greater blessedness, the contrary whereof is sufficiently evident.

Objection II. The common doctrine of original sin inherent, which supposes every man and woman to be born with sinful qualities, vilifies and pours great contempt on human nature, &c. If we act upon this principle, we shall rather hate than love one another.

Answer I. A depression of human nature under a due and deep sense of such uni-

versal sin and misery, is the first step towards our recovery by the grace of God and the gospel. *Blessed are the poor in spirit, for their's is the kingdom of heaven*, or the blessedness of the gospel; *Matt.* v. 3. There were many who professed Christianity in Laodicea, knew not that they were *wretched and miserable, and poor, and blind and naked*, therefore they did not seriously apply to Christ to be made partakers of his blessings; *Rev.* iii. 17. It is from a knowledge of our sin and misery by the law, that we come to seek after the salvation of grace; *Rom.* iii. 19, 24. And I am persuaded that it is the pride and self-sufficiency of men not acknowledging their folly, wretchedness, and ruin, that is one of the chief hindrances to the acceptance of the grace of Christ.

Answer II. It is yet more unreasonable to suppose, that the acknowledgment of this universal wretchedness of mankind should incline us to hate one another; are we not rather led hereby to pity each other under our common frailties and miseries? And is not this pity the first proper expression of love to the miserable?

Objection III. There can be no man born with principles of sin, or sinful qualities, unless God be made the author of sin, because God who makes the nature of every man, makes all his qualities also. Nor could such a constitution of nature be a righteous constitution, which continues the propagation of every child with sinful principles in him, for it is the same thing as if God infused sin into them; and therefore there is no such constitution.

Answer. Hath not a wise and good God, considered as Creator, ordained such a constitution of nature, whereby the most monstrous births are brought into the world by sinful mixtures, if mankind abuse themselves with brutes? And may not the great God be good and wise even in this constitution? Cannot a God of equity and goodness appoint such a course of nature among fallen mankind, whereby a drunkard or a lewd person may produce a child bearing the vicious qualities of the parent, or the miserable effects of the parent's sins? And yet the order of nature may be wise and righteous. Is not madness propagated through whole families, and sometimes in several successions, by the fixed constitution of the God of nature, without God's own infusing madness into the brain or blood? Has not God appointed a seed to bring forth a plant? But if the seed be any way corrupted, it may by the divine appointment of the course of nature bring forth a corrupt tree. Is it God that infuses all these evil and corrupt qualities into men or plants, because his appointed order of nature, or his sovereign interposing will, does not hinder and prevent them?

It is a very needless thing to tell us that known truth, that "the course of nature, separate from the agency of God, is no cause, or is nothing;" for this piece of instruction in metaphysical science, abates not the force of my argument.

Objection IV. The notion of deriving a sinful nature from Adam, runs foul upon this rock, that God doth not make or create the nature of every man who cometh into the world, because God cannot make a thing that is sinful.

Answer. Suppose, God is constantly producing, by the sun, air, and rain, the harvest of the field according to his great law of vegetation; but if some person should sprinkle the seed-corn with a poisonous juice which might infect every grain, the seed might produce corn of a mortal quality. Now if it be asked, Did God make this harvest of corn? The answer is, Yes: But did he make this corn poisonous? No, by no means. Now in these conceptions there is no difficulty or danger of mistake. But if men have a mind to be captious, they may spend whole pages in cavilling. The plain case is this:

God the Creator makes the nature of every man by his original and almighty order of creation or propagation: But it was Adam brought sin into the nature, and made it sinful.

There are some other objections which have been raised against this doctrine, *viz.* "If original sin be natural, it is unavoidable, then it is necessary, then it cannot be culpable," &c. But all of this kind, with many others, are sufficiently answered, not only in the late *Vindication of the Scripture Doctrine of Original Sin;* but in many smaller papers which Mr. Hebden, of Suffolk, has lately published on this occasion, as well as in many other excellent writers, ancient and modern. Yet it is evident that some of the opposers of truth find it a more easy and a more pleasant thing to repeat with assurance what they have said themselves, than to take due notice of what their fathers, or their neighbours have answered.

ESSAY II.

A PLAIN EXPLICATION OF THE DOCTRINE OF IMPUTED SIN AND IMPUTED RIGHTEOUSNESS.

THE doctrine of the imputation of sin and righteousness hath been attended with many noisy controversies in the christian world; and though these things may be frequently met with in common life, and that without any controversy, yet they seem to have created such difficulties in religion, as are hard to be compromised. Let us make one more attempt, and try whether these notions and expressions may not be set in so fair and easy a light, by tracing out the plainest ideas of them in the common affairs of mankind, that when they are applied to religious subjects and texts of Scripture, it may vanquish these difficulties, and reconcile the sentiments of several contesting parties in Christianity.

When a man has broken any of the laws of his country, and is actually fined or imprisoned, or put to public shame or death, or is condemned to fines or imprisonments, to the pillory or the gallows, it is plain that "sin is imputed to him, his wickedness is upon him, and he bears his iniquity;" that is, he is accounted or reputed a criminal by the court of justice, and he is condemned or dealt with as an offender, he is made liable to, or obliged to bear the punishment, or he is actually punished.

On the other hand, if a righteous or innocent man is falsely accused of any crime, and he is acquitted by the court, then "sin is not imputed to him," by that court, or he is not condemned, "but righteousness is imputed to him," or he is reputed and pronounced righteous, and dealt with as an innocent or as a righteous man; or, in another Scripture phrase, "his righteousness is upon him."

Or if a reward be either assigned or actually given to a man according to the law, upon the account of any righteous or good action he has done, this act of virtue or goodness is imputed to him, and "his righteousness is upon him," he is dealt with as a righteous and deserving person, "the reward of righteousness" is given him.

If a man has been guilty of a crime which deserves capital punishment, but the punishment is remitted by the mercy of the prince upon his repentance, at the intercession of some nobleman, and he is entirely pardoned, then "sin is not imputed to him," he is justified from that crime, and "righteousness is imputed to him" by the free favour of the prince, that is, he is not condemned but absolved; he is not liable to punishment now, but he has a right to impunity and life, or he is dealt with as a righteous person, or as though he had not transgressed.

Or suppose a man has been guilty of treason, and his estate is taken away from him,

and from his children for ever, then "the sin of the father is not imputed to the father only, but to the children also, that is, they bear the iniquity of their father, his punishment is laid upon them;" they suffer for their father's sin or crime, and that in their following generations even to late posterity, they are exposed to poverty and hardships for the treason of their ancestor, and his sin is imputed to them as well as to him.

If the crime of which a man is guilty, be murder of the innocent, and the criminal forfeits his life and estate by the sentence of the law, and his children become beggars and vagabonds, then the blood of the innocent man is said to be upon the murderer, and upon his children, because they also suffer for their father's crime. When the Jews imprecate the guilt of the blood of Christ which they shed, to be imputed to them, and punished on them and their children, this is their language, Matt. xxvii. 25, *His blood be on us and on our children.*

Or if we should suppose some criminal to have incurred the penalty of imprisonment, banishment, or scourging, and the laws of the state should permit a friend of his to become his surety, and to suffer these penalties in his room, then the crime is said to "be imputed to the surety," or "to be laid upon him," he bears the iniquity of the criminal, he stands liable to the penalty, and actually suffers for the sin of another man: And thus the crime is not imputed to the original offender, but upon his submission to his prince, and trusting in his mercy, he is entirely acquitted, and dealt with as an innocent or righteous man; then righteousness is imputed to him, though his crime was imputed to his kind surety, when he suffered for it; and the sufferings of the surety are imputed to the criminal, when he is absolved or acquitted on that account.

And if we should suppose the prince, or the laws of the land, to permit this kind friend or surety to exert himself in some eminent act of obedience or service to which a reward is promised; and all this to procure some further favour for the criminal, and to entitle him to the promised reward, then this act of eminent service may be said to be imputed to the original criminal, that is, he is rewarded on the account of it; so that upon the whole, the criminal comes to have not only a freedom from guilt, and a right to impunity, but a right also to the reward, in virtue of what his kind friend and surety has suffered and done for him. The criminal is both pardoned, justified, and rewarded for the sake of what his friend has done or suffered, and his friend's doings, as well as his sufferings, may be said to be imputed to him,

Or if any man practise obedience and righteousness in an eminent or illustrious manner, and he together with his posterity are dignified and rewarded on the account of that eminent obedience, then this obedience and righteousness of the father is imputed to the children, his righteousness is upon them; that is, they are dignified and dealt with as though they had been eminently righteous and obedient, upon the account of what their father was and did.

Now, if among the histories of the nations we have any transactions of this kind recorded by ancient writers, do we not easily understand what these writers say? Is not their meaning very plain and intelligible? Should we stand debating with long chicanery and cavilling, by rules of grammer, logic, and politics, whether such things were possible or no? Is not the sense easy to a common reader? Then why should we think these same sort of things and phrases, in matters of religion, are so dark and so difficult, as to need huge comments and quarrelsome folios to explain them? Why should we not agree in the plain meaning of them, when we meet with any such phrases

among the sacred writers? And when we find such representations made to us in the things that relate to God and man, sin and righteousness, in the books that teach us the way to salvation, why should we not receive them in their plain common sense, without contending about them?

The chief difficulty in adjusting our common ideas in any of these cases seems to me to be this: How can the particular acts of the treason of the parent be imputed to a child, especially in its infancy, though it is granted that he suffers banishment and poverty for the sake of his father's treason? I say, how can these particular criminal actions be imputed to him, since this infant was never capable of committing these acts of treason, they being quite out of the reach of a child, and impossible for him to commit?

Or how can those eminent and illustrious acts of obedience or righteousness which were performed by a father, be imputed to a child, if that child never stood either under a direct obligation, nor had any capacity to perform those very actions and services?

To these inquiries, I make these two plain answers:

Answer I. Those acts of treason, or acts of service, by very plain and common forms and figures of speech, are said to be imputed to the children, or to be upon them, when they sufier or enjoy the obvious and legal consequences of their fathers' treasons, or of their eminent services taken in the gross and comprehensive view of them, as they are criminal or meritorious; though the particular actions and circumstances of those treasons, or of those services, could never have been practised by the children, at least in their minority. This would give no difficulty at all to the reader, who should peruse these human histories, and read such narratives in them; and why should it give us any difficulty when we read this divine account of things in the holy writings, or in human discourses on divine subjects?

I answer also in the second place,

Answer II. The words *sin* and *righteousness* may be taken in common authors, as I shall shew presently they are often taken in Scripture, in these two senses:

Sin or iniquity signifies either the particular acts of disobedience to a law, or it signifies the legal result of those disobedient acts, that is, the guilt or the liableness to condemnation, and obligation to bear punishment which arises from those acts of disobedience, according to the law.

And thus when we say the sin or iniquity of the father is imputed to the children of a traitor, who never were nor could be precisely in their father's situation or circumstances, we do not mean that every single evil act of the father is charged upon the child, as if the child had done it; but that the guilt or liableness to punishment which arises from those acts of the father is so far transferred or imputed to the child, that the child suffers banishment or poverty for the sake of it: And this according to the law and custom of nations is esteemed just and righteous.

In like manner righteousness has two senses: It either signifies the particular acts of obedience to any law or command of a superior, or it signifies the result of those actions, that is, a right to impunity, a freedom from punishment, and a right to life, or liberty, or honour, or any reward which belonged by the law to such acts of obedience.

And so when we say "the righteousness of the father is imputed to the child of a person" who has performed some eminent act of service or obedience, we do not mean that all those special acts and circumstances of the father's service or obedience are minutely and particularly imputed to the child; but the general result of those acts, that

is, the rectitude in court, or the right to impunity and reward, which is the result of the father's performances, is imputed to the child.

Now, if we would but try to explain every text of Scripture wherein either imputed sin or imputed righteousness are mentioned in the word of God, either in express words, or in the plain sense and meaning of them, I am persuaded we should find them all easy and intelligible, and free from cavils and controversies.

If we met with such narratives in common history as I have suggested, surely we should not expect that the writer should express himself in such a nice accuracy of learned and scholastic language, as men of modern controversy are almost constrained to use, in order to guard their expressions against all possible cavil and objection. Nor should we enter into such a detail of critical and perplexing debates about every punctilio both of word and sense in this history, as is too often done when we read these things in Scripture, as relating to Adam and Christ. And since the holy Scriptures were written for the common use of mankind, and their general meaning is obvious and plain, why should we rack every syllable, and put every expression to the torture, to make it confess what we have a mind to have it speak according to the different parties under which we list ourselves?

If we consider that account which Scripture gives us of all mankind falling under sin, and the legal or penal consequences thereof by the sin of Adam; or if we consider Christ's taking upon him the sins of men, bearing their sins, and suffering for them as a surety or sacrifice; or if we consider righteousness imputed to those that believe, or even the righteousness or obedience of Christ imputed to penitents and believers; I think we should find no great difficulty to adjust our ideas of these things, if we would but suffer ourselves to form our sentiments of these matters by the plain, natural, and common expressions and ideas of men about these subjects, and in a candid manner receive the obvious meaning of such language.

In order to confirm what I have said, I desire to make these three remarks:

Remark I. That there are several such histories in the Bible, wherein instances of the like kinds among the transactions of men, are delivered down to us in such sort of expressions, or words of the same import.

Abraham's eminent obedience to God in bringing his son Isaac to the altar, was rewarded, not only in blessings to Abraham himself, but to his seed. Gen. xxii. 17, 18, *Thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies, and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because thou hast obeyed my voice.* Here it may be said, that Abraham's obedience, at least in the result and consequences of it, is imputed to his seed.

This same promise is repeated again to Isaac, and assigned to his posterity, for the sake of Abraham's eminent piety and obedience. Gen. xxvi. 3—5, *I will perform the oath which I sware unto Abraham thy father, and I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed, all these countries—because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my statutes, and my laws.* Abraham's righteousness was thus imputed to Isaac and his seed.

Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, was "zealous for the Lord among the children of Israel," and God gave him and his seed after him the covenant of an everlasting priesthood, because he was zealous for his God, and slew the criminals in Israel; *Numb.* xxv. 11. This eminent act of righteousness was so far imputed to his children, as that they received the reward of it as well as himself.

Achan, who had stolen the silver, and the rich garment, and the wedge of gold, from among the spoils of Jericho, provoked the Lord to anger; and his crime, by the appointment of God, was so far imputed to his children, that they were all stoned for the sake of his crime. The guilt or punishment of it was imputed to the children together with the father; *Joshua* vii. 24.

The falsehood and covetousness of Gehazi were imputed to his posterity, 2 *Kings* v. 25, when God, by the mouth of his prophet, pronounced that "leprosy should cleave unto him, and to his seed for ever."

Many other instances of this kind might be collected from the sacred writings, to shew us how persons may not only have their own sin, or their own righteousness imputed to them in the punishments or the rewards they receive; but other persons also may have that sin or righteousness imputed to them; that is, they may fall under condemnation and punishment, or have a right to impunity and reward by a wise and holy constitution of God, upon the account of the crime or obedience of their forefathers.

Note, It is not my business and design, in this place, to justify at large the conduct of Providence in these instances, but only to represent the actual facts or matter of history, and shew how very easy and intelligible these sort of representations are, and that they would afford no difficulty to a reader, nor occasion any controversy about the sense of them, if we came with honest minds to read them, and not under any former prejudices or bias.

Remark II. It is pretty evident that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament use the words *sin* and *iniquity*, חטא or חטאה and עון and Ἁμαρτία both in the Hebrew and Greek languages, to signify not only the criminal actions themselves, but also sometimes they signify the legal result and consequences of these actions, that is, the guilt or liableness to punishment, and sometimes the punishment itself, whether it fall upon the original criminal, or upon others for his sake, and on his account.

In the same manner the Scripture uses the word *righteousness*, צדק or צדקה and Δικαιοσύνη, to signify, that right to impunity, that rectitude in court, that justification, or being pronounced righteous, or that right to reward, which is the result of those particular acts of piety and obedience, as well as to signify the particular acts of obedience or piety themselves. If this has not been sufficiently shewn already by writers in this controversy, a moderate study of some of those texts where these words are used, will convince us of it.

I might give a short specimen of it in a few Scriptures. Job xxxiii. 26, *God will render unto man his righteousness*, that is, not the very righteous actions, but the proper result of them, or those blessings which are the fruits of righteousness. Psalm xxiv. 5, *He shall receive the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his salvation*, that is, the reward of righteousness. Hosea x. 12, *Sow to yourselves in righteousness*, that is, in and by actions of piety and goodness; *till the Lord come and rain righteousness upon you*, that is, till he pour down on you the rewards or fruits of piety.

I might add here, that in several places of St. Paul's epistles, the word *righteousness* is used to signify justification in the passive sense of the word, or a justified state, a rectitude in court, or a right to impunity and life. Rom. x. 3, *Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth*; which must mean that Christ is the

great design or accomplishment of the law of God in order to the justification of believers, or to their obtaining a right to life. Rom. x. 10, *With the heart man believeth unto righteousness*, that is, to obtain justification, or a justified state. Gal. ii. 21, *If righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain;* that is, if a justified state, or a right to life came by the law, &c. And particularly where the word λογιζομαι, or *impute*, is joined with *righteousness*, as *Rom.* iv. 3. Gal. iii. 6, *Abraham believed God, and it was counted*, or imputed, *to him for righteousness.* Rom. iv. 5, *His faith is counted for righteousness;* it is not ἀντι or ὑπερ, that is, "for and instead of righteous works," but εἰς δικαιοσυνην, that is, in order to justification, or acceptance with God.

And so in other places of Scripture, work whether good or evil, is put for the reward of it. Job xxxiv. 11, *The work of a man will he render unto him;* that is, the recompence or fruit of his work: So the word *iniquity* is used to signify the punishment of it. Hosea xii. 13, *Ye have plowed wickedness, ye have reaped iniquity;* that is, the punishment that it deserves. So Paul desires Philemon "to impute any wrong he had received from Onesimus to himself;" *Philemon* ver. 18. Not the evil action, but the damage he sustained.

And, upon this account, when sin or righteousness are said to be imputed to any man upon the account of the works of righteousness or sin which he himself has done, then these words, perhaps, may sometimes denote the good or evil actions themselves, together with the legal result of them in guilt and condemnation, or the legal rectitude in absolution and justification. But when the sinful or righteous actions of one person are so imputed to another as to bring punishments or rewards upon that other, then generally the words *imputed sin* and *righteousness* signify the legal and forensic result of these sinful or righteous actions, that is, an obligation or a liableness to punishment on one side, or a right to impunity and the reward on the other.

It may be granted, indeed, if one man commit murder, and three or four other men contrived or encouraged, aided or abetted the murderer in the commission of the crime, perhaps the action of murder, as well as the legal penalties of it, may be in a sense imputed to all these men, because they are all actual sharers in the fact: But this is not the case in these scriptural imputations we are speaking of, therefore it is only guilt or penalty that is imputed or transferred.

Some person may be ready to inquire,

First, How can the guilt of sin, or the condemnation for it, be justly imputed or transferred from one man to another, without the imputation of the sinful actions themselves? Or how can the legal rectitude, that is, the right to impunity and life, or the righteousness of one be imputed to another, without the righteous actions themselves being imputed? To this I answer,

Answer. The very same just constitution, or law, whether human or divine, by which the actions themselves, whether good or evil, could be supposed to be imputed, is sufficient for the imputation of the legal result of those actions, and that with as much justice. Nay, I might add, with much more justice in many cases, may the legal result or punishment of sinful actions be imputed to others, or transferred to them, than the actions themselves: For the imputation of the evil actions to an innocent person, if it could be done, would carry more of crime, and blame, and shame, and of personal defilement and demerit in it, than the mere imputation of their guilt, that is, a liableness to condemnation and punishment. And, indeed, when the punishment is trans-

ferred to others, then the sin or guilt is said to be imputed to them, as I have shewn before.

Secondly, It will be objected, May not the very same sinful actions of the father be imputed to the posterity, since the children were in the father naturally when he committed those sins? Is not Levi said to pay tithes in Abraham, *Heb.* vii. 9, because "he was yet in the loins of his great grandfather when he paid tithes to Melchisedeck?"

Answer I. The apostle expresses it not as a matter of strict reasoning, because he adds the words, *as I may so say*, to intimate, it is rather an allusion or emblem, than strict reasoning.

Answer II. If there could be supposed any advantage by this natural in-being of all men in Adam to support the imputation of his sin to them, yet there can be no necessity of it, for Christ was not naturally in us, though our sins were imputed to him. This imputation of sin, therefore, to the one or the other, signifies only the transferring the guilt, condemnation, or punishment, and not the imputation of the same evil actions, or the transferring them from Adam to us, or from us to our blessed Saviour.

Thirdly, A third argument to prove the good or evil actions themselves imputed, as some suppose, may arise from the strong expressions of Scripture, especially in *Rom.* v. 19, where there is so particular a comparison between our being made or constituted sinners by the disobedience of Adam, and our being made or constituted righteous by the obedience of Christ. To this I answer,

Answer. That the jewish and all the Eastern writers deal in very strong figures and expressions to signify plain and obvious things; and therefore there is some allowance to be made in the explication of them, or when we reduce them to plain language. And besides, as Adam was the head and spring not only of our guilt and death by imputation, but of our inherent sin by natural propagation also; so Christ was the head and spring not only of our justification and life by his imputed righteousness, but of our inherent holiness or righteousness by sanctification: And perhaps the strength of the expressions might be used to intimate all this to us.

But if only the result of their good or evil actions were imputed to us, those strong expressions might be used. I am sure when "all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, are confessed over the head of the goat, while Aaron lays both his hands upon it, and he is said to put or transfer them all upon the head of the goat, and that the goat should bear upon him all their iniquities into the wilderness, or a land of separation;" *Lev.* xvi. 21; all these words can signify nothing more than transferring to the goat, the guilt, or condemnation, or liableness to punishment, misery, and death, which these sins deserved, and to which the goat might be exposed; for a brute creature cannot have human sins any otherwise imputed or transferred to it; the particular sinful actions of man cannot be transferred to the brutal sacrifice in any other sense: Nor do I see a necessity of any other sense in which the sin of Adam was imputed to his posterity, or the sins of men to the Son of God.*

* Let what will be said to confine the sense of this imputation of sin or righteousness to the legal or forensic result of good or evil actions; let what will be said to exclude and deny the imputation of the actions themselves to others; yet those who oppose this doctrine will, and do, level almost all their arguments against the imputation of the actions themselves, and then triumph in having demolished what we never built, and in refuting what we never asserted or maintained. Nor do I know any other reason for this their conduct, but that while they put such senses upon our words as we disclaim, they can glory in their own fancied victories; but where the truth or integrity of it lies, I know not.

If one would keep our ideas of these things as clear and distinct as possible, I think we may do it by virtue of this distinction, or this two-fold sense of the words sin and righteousness.

Fourthly, It is possible some may, in the fourth place, object that it cannot properly be called imputed righteousness, if the righteous actions themselves are not imputed; for in proper speech the result of Christ's righteousness, that is, the right to impunity and eternal life, which he procured for us, is given to us, rather than imputed.

Answer. To this I answer and grant, that this is the very language of Scripture: It is called, "the gift of righteousness," *Rom.* v. 17; and *eternal life*, which is the result of Christ's righteousness, *is the gift of God through Jesus Christ*, Rom. vi. 23; and "the forgiveness of sins is given to Israel," *Acts* v. 31. Yet let it be observed also, that the very reward itself is sometimes said to be reckoned or imputed in Scripture; *Rom.* iv. 4, the word is λογίζεται, which our translators have construed *imputed* in the next verse. But this leads me to the next remark.

Remark III. The Scripture does not, as I remember, any where in express words assert, "that the sin of Adam is imputed to his children, or that the sins of mankind, or of believers, were imputed to Christ, or that the righteousness of Christ is imputed to believers;" yet still I think the sense and true meaning of all these expressions is sufficiently found in several places of Scripture.

If we consult the language of the prophets Isaiah, and Jeremy, and Daniel, and the apostles John, and Paul, and Peter, in their representation of some of these subjects, *Isaiah* liii. 4—12, and *Jer.* xxiii. 6, and xxxiii. 16. *Dan.* ix. 24. *Rom.* v. 12—19. 1 *Cor.* xv. 3, 21, 22. *Gal.* iii. 13. 2 *Cor.* v. 21. *Ephes.* i. 7, and ii. 5, 13. *Phil.* iii. 9. *Col.* i. 14, 20. *Heb.* ix. 14, 26. 1 *Pet.* ii. 24, and iii. 18. 1 *John* i. 7, and ii. 2, and iv. 10, and *Rev.* i. 5, and v. 9, and many other Scriptures, we shall find the substance and true sense of these phrases as I have explained them.

Yet since these express words and phrases of the "imputation of Adam's sin to us, of our sins to Christ, or of Christ's righteousness to us," are not plainly written in Scripture, we should not impose these very expressions on every Christian; let every one take their liberty in manifesting their sense of these plain scriptural doctrines in such words and phrases of their own, as are modest and secure from offence and danger, or confine themselves to Scripture-language.

But if these words were expressly written in the Bible, they could not reasonably be interpreted to any other sense, than that which I have explained in and by so many examples, both in the Scripture-history and in common life. Let us make this appear in a few instances.

When we say, the sin of Adam is imputed to all his posterity, can we possibly mean that every evil motion of Adam's eye, or his heart, towards the forbidden fruit, with every thought of unbelief of the threatening, or every working of ingratitude toward God in his mind, or pride in his heart, together with the action of eating this fruit at his wife's request, is minutely and particularly imputed to all his infant-seed? Can these criminal thoughts be imputed to them who never were under any temptation, or capacity of tasting that fruit, or of breaking that particular law of God? Must we not necessarily therefore mean, that it is the guilt of Adam in that sin, or his liableness to condemnation and punishment, to misery and death, is imputed or transferred to his posterity? "Imputation of sin," in this case signifies the "imputation or transferring of the legal or penal consequences of sin," that is, misery and death.

When the sins of David, and of Mary Magdalene, and Rahab, and of all the adulterers, the harlots, and the murderers that ever repented and believed on Christ, are said in general to be imputed to Christ, is it proper to explain it by saying all the particular lustful thoughts, with every adulterous wish, and every impious and bloody purpose in their hearts, together with all the lewd and vile actions both of men and women, are in themselves imputed, reckoned, or transferred to the pure and holy Jesus, when he was made a sacrifice for their sins? Can Christ be counted or reputed as the lewd or bloody transgressor? Can any thing else, therefore, be meant by such an expression of Magdalene's, or of David's sins imputed to Christ, than that the guilt or liableness to punishment, which is the legal result of their crimes, was laid upon Christ when "he bore all their sins in his body on the cursed tree?"

Let it be considered, that if all their sinful actions could be, and were imputed to Christ, which are only and properly personal, I cannot well see how to avoid the imputation of the vitiosity and sinfulness and dreadful demerit of all these actions to Christ, together with the actions themselves, and thus the defilement of their sins, in every bad sense of it, will be transferred and imputed to the blessed Jesus, the holy one of God, which I fear would too nearly border upon the language of blasphemy.

It is evident indeed, in many places of Scripture, that our sins were imputed to our blessed Saviour, when Christ *bore the sins of many;* when he *was made sin for us,* that is, a sin-offering; when *the Lord laid on him the iniquities of us all;* when the *Lord pleased to bruise him and put him to grief,* and made *his soul an offering for sin:* But I think it can never mean any more than this, that he was made a proper sacrifice of atonement or expiation for those sins, by bearing sorrows and punishments, and death, upon that account, which were the legal result of our sins, in order to deliver us from them.*

So when we say, "the righteousness of Christ is imputed to believers," I think it can never mean that every particular righteous action of Christ, as he was a holy observer of the jewish law, a preacher of the gospel, a master of a family, or a worker of miracles, can be imputed to women or children, who were never called to any such office, or to perform these actions; nor can his suffering of circumcision, or his celebration of jewish festivals in the temple, among the males of the house of Israel, be minutely and particularly imputed to gentile Christians, both male and female, who never were under the command of circumcision, or who would have sinned in practising jewish ceremonies: And therefore the righteousness of Christ, when it is said to "be imputed to believers," can mean no more than that the legal result of his righteous acts, or acts of obedience to God, is imputed to them, or bestowed upon them. This "gift of righteousness," therefore, is a right to impunity, a legal rectitude in the court of God, an absolution from sin and punishment, a pardon of sin, and justification in the sight of God, and a right to eternal life; which are conferred upon them for the sake of what Christ has done and suffered.

And indeed, for this reason, I have sometimes scrupled to use this language, though some very good writers have used it, *viz.* that the merits of Christ, or his satisfaction, are imputed to us. The satisfaction of Christ is the recompence which he made to God for

* If any one will doubt whether in Scripture the sins of one person are ever imputed to another, or borne by another, in the sense declared, let him read even Doctor Whitby himself, in his exposition on 1 *Peter* ii. 24, 25, where I think any man may find satisfaction in this point, how Christ *bore our sins in his own body on the tree.*

our breach of his law: His merit, in its most natural sense, signifies his proper desert and worthiness of all those divine honours and blessings which were his own personal rewards, as well as of that pardon of sin and eternal life which he obtained for us: And this merit and satisfaction arise from the transcendent value and dignity of the person of Christ. Surely this satisfaction cannot be imputed to us properly, lest we should be said to have satisfied, and made God a recompence for our sins. His merit cannot be imputed to us in a strict sense, for that would make us meritors, either of such peculiar glories as he had, or at least of our own pardon of sin and eternal life.

But if we sink the sense of the word *merit*, so as to mean nothing but those blessings of pardon, grace, and eternal life, which Christ has merited for us, or rather the legal right of true believers to those blessings, according to the covenant of grace; then the phrase of "his merits imputed," may be used without offence or error.

Here let me make these two reflections:

Reflection I. It is the explaining this doctrine of imputed sin and imputed righteousness, so as to include all the particular acts of sin and righteousness, with their proper merit, or demerit, &c. that has tempted so many persons to deny the doctrine itself.

Reflection II. If it should be allowed that the very act of Adam's disobedience was imputed to all his posterity; if the very same sinful actions of men could be imputed to Christ; if the very actions of Christ's obedience and righteousness could be imputed to believers, what greater punishments could the one justly and reasonably suffer; or what blessings could the other reasonably be entitled to, or enjoy, according to scriptural representations of things, beyond what Scripture has assigned, either to mankind, as the result of the sin of Adam, or to Christ as the result of the sins of men, or to believers as the result of the righteousness of Christ?

Upon the whole, I conclude, the imputation of Adam's first sin to his offspring, the imputation of our sins to Christ, and imputation of his righteousness to us, which are so often used by our protestant divines, may be very well understood in a scriptural sense, or a sense much favoured by Scripture, according to the common ideas and notions which people have of one person's suffering for the sins or crimes of another, or one person's receiving special benefits for the good deeds of another, as appears in the beginning of this Essay, without running into needless cavils or controversies, into improper language and dangerous extremes.

And in general, I may make this just inference: If we would but allow the expressions of Scripture, or the plain and obvious sense and meaning of those expressions, the same candour of interpretation as we allow to all men who write of civil or historical subjects in the like cases, and not cavil at them in common writings, we might sufficiently enter into the sense and meaning of God in his word, and find a greater uniformity in our sentiments: And we should also abound more in charity and love towards each other, if any lesser difficulties and darkness should remain upon our minds, and should lead us to some differences of opinion and expression about these subjects.

ESSAY III.

ON THE GUILT AND DEFILEMENT OF SIN, AND HOW FAR THEY MAY BE TRANSFERRED TO OTHERS.

IN order to clear the doctrine of imputed sin from all further difficulties, it may be proper to enter into a disquisition of the true sense of those words, *viz. sin*, *guilt*, and *defilement*,* which are frequently made use of in Scripture, and in the common language of Christians: Let us try to clear them from all ambiguity, by setting the several distinct senses in which they are used in a perspicuous light.

Sin is the most general name for all manner of moral evil, and in its general or abstract nature, or rather the sinfulness of it, is "want of conformity to the law of God in the things which that law requires," or "the transgression of that law in those things which it forbids;" and thus it includes both the sins of omission and sins of commission.

Again, Sin is to be considered as it is a principle or habit in the mind, which inclines us to break the law of God; or as it appears in the actions of life, which are actual transgressions or violations of this law.

Yet further, there are two things to be considered in sin, *viz.* the real and the relative evil of it.

First, The real evil of sin consists in its hurtful nature and evil qualities, whether it be considered in the habits of the mind, or in the actions of life. Let us survey them both briefly.

The real evil of sin is that disorder in the habits, or principles, or powers of the soul, which inclines it to act contrary to the holy nature, perfections, and image of God, as well as against his law. It is a disorder also in these very actions, as they are contrary to the nature of God, defacing his image, spoiling the soul's original rectitude, breaking the true order of things, and destroying the truest happiness of man.†

This disorder in the soul, or its principles of action, is called in Scripture, *lust*, *concupiscence*, *corruption*, *sin that dwells in us*, *the body of death*, *the flesh*, *the carnal mind*, *the law of sin*, and *the law in the members*. The same disorder in the actions of life makes them be called *sins*, *abominations*, *iniquity*, *wickedness*, *evil works* or *ways*, &c.

* Though the abstract substantives *guilt* and *defilement* are not much used in Scripture in our translation, yet I presume none will be so weak as to object against my representation of them as Scripture-language, since their conjugates or derivatives, *guilty*, *guiltiness*, *guiltless*, *defile*, *defiled*, &c. are frequently used.

† As virtue and holiness are the true rectitude and order of the human soul, when all its powers are in proper subjection to God, and harmony with each other; so sin is properly the disorder of it, when the inferior powers of appetite and affection rebel against the superior and guiding powers of reason and conscience, and the will and passions are not kept in their due obedience to the Creator.

I add yet further, sin considered as a real evil, and a disorder of heart and life, hath its natural effects and consequences following it, such as pain or anguish of conscience, self-vexation, shame, &c.

Secondly, Let us consider the relative evil of sin. This consists more particularly in its respect to the governing authority and law of God; it is a contrariety to the precepts of that law, partly in the very principles and habits of the soul, as well as in the actions of life.*

But as this relative evil chiefly belongs to sinful actions, it is more properly an actual opposition to, or violation of God's righteous law, and so it subjects the sinner to the punishment which that law threatens.†

The terms of *unrighteousness*, *disobedience*, *trespass*, and *transgression*, are sometimes applied to this relative evil of sin in the actions of life in Scripture, or more properly it is called guilt, or guiltiness before God, and it signifies our liableness to punishment because of sin.

As the real evil of sin hath its natural effects and consequences on the sinner; so the punishment which the law threatens may be called the legal consequence of sin, and includes pain, misery, or death, inflicted upon sinners.

Again, as the relative evil of sin is removed by pardon through the atonement of Christ, so the real evil of it is removed by sanctification by the Holy Spirit. The first changes our condemned state into reconciliation with God; the last changes our sinful nature and temper into the image of God and holiness.

Perhaps some person may object against this scheme, and say all the evil that is in sin is relative, for the mere natural action abstracted from all its relations hath no real evil in it; therefore this distribution of the relative and real evil of sin is not just and proper. I answer,

Answer. Sin, considered as a bad principle in the soul, or as a bad action in life, is indeed a real evil, for it hath many positive evil qualities and natural evil effects, which all mankind know and feel, and which are too many to be reckoned up; but the abstract idea of sin, or rather the sinfulness of any action, is granted to be relative, because it consists in a want of conformity to the law of God.

I grant also that sin may in some sense be called a relative evil, because it bears a contrariety to the image of God, as well as it consists in a contrariety to the law of God. Yet since sin in the heart or in the life, in habit or in act, is a real bad quality, and is contrary to the image of God, and naturally tends to ruin a soul by destroying its good qualities, its holy rectitude or holiness, its peace and happiness, as well as legally by subjecting it to punishment; I choose to call that disorder which hath such a real and natural tendency to spoil God's image and our happiness, *the real evil of sin:* And I would call its demerit or desert of death, or its legal subjection of us to punishment, *the relative evil:* And I desire leave to do so at present, that I may not admit confusion into this discourse, and may prevent all contention about words.

* The apostle John describes it thus, 1 *John* iii. 4, ἡ ἁμαρτία ἐστιν ἡ ἀνομία, "sin is unlawfulness," which our translators have called the *transgression of the law.*

† I say, the relative evil of sin belongs chiefly to sinful actions, rather than to the habits and principles of sin in the soul, because I take the evil inclinations of the heart prompting us to act contrary to the law of God, and to be part of the real evil of sin: And besides I do not remember the word *guilt*, which is the proper relative evil of sin, is ever in Scripture ascribed to the habit or principle of sin without the act.

The general term *sin*, in Scripture, is frequently used to signify sometimes the relative, and sometimes the real evil of it. It is used promiscuously and indifferently in the Old Testament and in the New, both for the sinful disorder of our hearts and lives, and also for the demerit or punishment of some sinful action. It is used for the opposition that is in sin to the holy nature of God, and to the soul's real happiness, as well as for the opposition of it to the law of God, and its subjecting us to the legal penalty.

Now let us consider what is the guilt of sin, and what is its defilement, and distinguish them as far as Scripture and common speech admit.

First, We will inquire into the meaning of *the guilt of sin;* and this will afford us the following observations:

Observation I. The words *guilt* and *guilty*, in their original and most proper sense, denote the relation of a sinful action or person to some law, and the obligation which the sinner lies under to make satisfaction to the law, by suffering some penalty. The English word is supposed to be derived from the Saxon word *gild*, a tax or fine; and *gildan* is a person obliged or liable to make amends, or pay for a fault committed.

In the learned languages it hath the same sense: *Reus* and *reatus* in Latin, and ἔνοχος and ἔνοχη in the Greek, seem to be entirely confined in their significations to the relation or situation in which the sinner stands with regard to the law, and represent a person bound to answer for a fault or transgression of the law.

So our guilt or guiltiness before God, originally and properly denotes the relative evil of sin, or its transgression of the law, and the sinner's obligation to make amends for it by suffering some penalty.

Observation II. It must be granted that the word *guilt* by some writers has been distinguished into these two senses, *viz.* there is "a guilt of the fault," which is called *reatus culpæ*, and there is "a guilt of the punishment," which is usually termed *reatus pœnæ:* And thus the term *guilt* or *guiltiness* is applied to a person three ways. Sometimes it signifies his having done the crime, or the sinful action; as when we say "a man is guilty of blasphemy," that is, "he blasphemed:" Sometimes it denotes his demerit or desert of the punishment threatened; and at other times it means only the legal subjection of a person to punishment thereby; as when we say, "the blasphemer is guilty of death," we mean he has deserved it, or at least he is liable to it.

Observation III. Observe also, that by using this word in these three distinct senses, we are led sometimes to mingle and unite all these senses in one; and so in the word *guilt* we sometimes include some idea of the actual fault or crime, and the personal demerit of the sinner, as well as its legal subjection of him to punishment; yet it is not always used in all these senses, but always in one or other of them.

Observation IV. Observe further, that we never say "a man is guilty of the fault," but when he is the actual personal sinner, and has deserved the punishment: But he may be said to "bear the guilt of sin," or "have the guilt laid on him," when he is made liable or subject to the punishment by the imputation of sin to him, according to any righteous compact or constitution, though he be not the personal or actual sinner, nor has merited punishment himself.

Observation V. When we speak of "the guilt of conscience," or "a guilty conscience," it means that sensible grief, or anguish of soul, which arises from a painful consciousness or remembrance of our having committed sin against God and his law;

and so it includes in it not only the fear and terror of the punishing justice of God, which is a legal consequent of sin, but also the shame that arises from our having done amiss, and from our unfitness to appear before a God of holiness under that sinful disorder, which is a natural consequent or effect of sin. This guilt of conscience belongs only to the personal offender, and can never be transferred by imputation to another.

But in the main, I think we may determine, that this word, the *guilt of sin*, or of a sinful action, as it was originally designed, so is it much more frequently, and more obviously used and understood concerning the legal consequent of that sin, or its just subjection of the sinner to punishment, which is its relative evil, than it is concerning the disorder of the sinful action, or the real evil of it. And indeed this is the only thing in sin which can be transferred and imputed to any other person, that is, the obligation to suffer the penalty, or to make amends for the violation of the law.

In the following part of this discourse therefore, when I use the word *guilt*, I desire to be understood chiefly, or only, concerning that liableness, obligation, or subjection to punishment under which sin may bring any man, whether it be actually and personally committed by himself, or whether it be transferred to him only by imputation. The use of words in different senses, and as including different ideas, has been often an unhappy spring of confusion and mistake, which we should avoid as much as we can, by confining words to a particular sense.*

Now let us consider what is the *filth* or *defilement of sin*.

The filthiness, pollution, or defilement of sin, which is so frequently mentioned in Scripture, is not any third thing really distinct from the two forementioned evils of sin, *viz.* the guilt of it, and the disorderly nature of it, that is, the relative and the real evil: Defilement is only a metaphor used by the Spirit of God sometimes to express one of these, *viz.* the legal guilt, but much more frequently to signify the other, *viz.* the criminal disorder; even as the word sin itself is used to denote both the relative and the real evil of it, *viz.* the legal guilt, and the moral or criminal disorder.

* Here let it be observed, that languages are at first formed by the bulk of mankind, who have not any great solicitude to secure the sense of each word, and confine it to one proper idea: And when different ideas approach near to one another, the same word is often used by them for two or three ideas, especially since mankind hath many more ideas than there are words in any language whatsoever to represent or signify them. And hereby it happens, that ideas running into one another by so near an approximation, the words that signify them, though they might be at first different, yet by degrees they run into one another's meaning, and bring much confusion into our conception of things. The words *guilt*, *sin*, *demerit*, are instances of this.

Let it be added also, that the figurative and metaphorical way of speaking is introduced into any language, by endeavouring to describe spiritual ideas by some resemblance to sensible and corporeal things: And though this may give a brightness and force, beauty and sensibility to the expression, where the ideas are perfectly known, yet it is too often in danger of introducing some mistake and error into the minds of those who afterward hear and read it. The words *filth* and *pollution*, &c. will evidence this.

If you ask, why this sort of language, with its various defects and dangers of mistake, is made use of by the sacred writers in Scripture, the answer is obvious: The Scripture was written for the bulk of mankind, who are not called to enter into accuracies and nice punctilios, and therefore it must speak their language, that it may be the better understood by them, how imperfect and ambiguous soever it may happen to be. And besides, as the use of figures and metaphors brightens and aggrandizes the things they represent, so the holy writers saw it necessary to represent their important ideas in the brightest and strongest images, and figures, and sensibilities, to strike the minds of the people with their great importance. And this was the custom also of eastern writers.

Therefore in explaining the Scriptures, as well as other writings, in a clear and distinct manner, if we would speak more exactly and accurately concerning things, and guard against every mistake in a critical and distinct explication of them, we should endeavour to keep the same ideas to the same words as far as ever we can; and having distinguished the different senses in which a word hath been used, we should confine, as far as possible, one word to one meaning or idea only.

The words *defilement* and *pollution*, are mere figures borrowed from things of the body, and applied to the soul, which is a spirit, and which in a strict and proper sense cannot be defiled. A body is said to be defiled, when it has something of a baser nature mingled with it or cast upon it, or when a body is so tainted and corrupted, that it becomes offensive to our senses: And this bodily filth many times is removed by passing through the water, or through the fire, whereby the body attains its primitive purity either in whole or in part. Now because there are some things in sin which are its proper evils, that bear a resemblance to bodily defilements, therefore the same word is metaphorically applied to the sins of the soul.

But since it was but a metaphor, a figure, or impropriety of speech, it must have something literal and proper which is signified thereby: Now all that I know of, that can be called the proper evil of sin, is either relative or real, and consists either in the guilt or in the disorder of it. I have no idea or conception of any thing different from these two, when I use the word *defilement* or *pollution:* And we must not abuse ourselves with Scripture-metaphors and figurative words, instead of real ideas, nor persuade ourselves into a fancy of more realities than there are or can be in nature. This would be to dishonour Scripture instead of explaining of it.

If I were to prove that these are the two only ideas in which we find the terms of filthiness, defilement, or pollution, used in Scripture, or in our best writers on sacred subjects, I might confirm it these three ways:

I. If we consider the effects which are represented to flow from the defilement of sin, they are all such as may be attributed either to the guilt or to the disorder of it.

1. The holy Scripture and our divines represent the filth or defilement of sin, as that which makes us offensive to God, as any corporeal defiled thing is offensive to ourselves. Now it is the guilt of sin that makes us offensive to the divine justice, for that is the attribute that vindicates the honour of his law, and executes the penalty upon those that have broken it, and are become guilty. And it is the disorderly nature of sin, whether in our hearts, or in our actions, that makes us offensive to the divine holiness; for sin in this sense is a contrariety to his holy nature, to all his moral perfections, his complete rectitude, his goodness, and his truth: It is in this sense, God is *of purer eyes than to behold iniquity;* Hab. i. 13. He will not let those come into his presence with approbation, whose hearts or lives are defiled, that is, under sinful disorders. This was typified by the levitical pollutions of old, when some bodily defilement excluded the Israelites from the camp and the tabernacle where God dwelt: He dwelt there in his majesty and justice, and threatened death to defiled persons that came near his altar, to represent his punishment of the guilt of sin; he dwelt there in his holiness, and commanded them to stand at a distance, to shew that the disorderly nature of sin made persons unfit to converse with God. Thus all the ceremonial pollutions of the Jews typified one of these two, either the guilt of sin, or its disorder and vitiosity.

2. The defilement of sin is represented as producing shame and fear in the sinner in the presence of God. A person in forbidden and defiled garments, or besmeared with mire and nastiness, is afraid to come into the presence of his prince, a wise and just governor, as well as ashamed to appear before him as a person of high dignity. Now one of these is the effect of the guilt of sin; the other of its disorder. A sinner fears the justice and majesty of God, because of his guilt, and the injury he has done to the divine law; he knows he is liable to death, he sees his own defilement and God's justice,

and is afraid and trembles. A sinner, in his sinful disorder of soul, is also ashamed in the presence of a holy God, seeing every thing in the divine nature so contrary to his own heart and his own actions, being defiled, that is, disordered by sin. Thus the guilt of sin produces fear, and the disorder of sin produces shame.

A parallel might be drawn in this instance also between the levitical defilements of the flesh and the more spiritual evils of sin. The mere suggestion of this thought is sufficient for those who are acquainted with the Mosaical ceremonies, and the representations of God, as dwelling in the holy of holies, in the glories of his justice and holiness.

3. The defilement of sin sometimes is represented as debasing the nature of the soul, and rendering it vile. *Psalm* xlix. 20, " A man without understanding," that is, without the fear or love of God, or true holiness, " is mean and vile, as the beasts that perish." This arises from the inward pravity or real evil that is in it. Vicious disorders, either in heart or life, debase the character of a creature; but under this idea the guilt of sin, or relative evil of it, is not contained, but only the disorder, or the real evil: But still it is plain that this representation always means the one or the other.

II. Another way to prove that the defilement of sin is no third thing distinct from the guilt and the disorder of it, may be this:

The methods or means of removing the defilement of sin are such as are suited to remove either the guilt or the disorder of it.

1. Washing is the most general means to remove bodily defilements; and this is a metaphor which the Scripture abounds in, sometimes to express the removal of guilt by atonement and pardon, and sometimes the removal of the disorder of sin in our souls by sanctification. When we are said to be " washed by the blood of Christ from our sins," *Rev.* i. 5, there the defilement implied must signify guilt: But when we are said to be washed and cleansed from a sinful nature, by " having the Spirit of God poured upon us," or by being " sprinkled with clean water," *Isaiah* xliv. 3. *Ezek.* xxxvi. 25, which is done in baptism and regeneration; or when we are bid to " wash us," and to " make us clean," *Isaiah* i. 16; in these places the defilement which is implied must signify the sinful disorders of our natures and lives.

This also is very evident in the levitical methods of cleansing the typical defilements of old: Sometimes the blood of the sacrifice was to be put on persons defiled, to signify the removal of guilt by the death of Christ the great sacrifice: Sometimes they were to be washed in clean water, to signify the removal of the inward moral disorder of sin by the sanctifying Spirit.

2. Another method of removing bodily defilements is by fire; so silver and gold passing through the fire lose their dross and impurity, and are refined and made pure: Now when the defilement of sin is represented as removed by fire, sometimes it signifies the removing the disorderly temper and qualities of mind, by the Spirit of God, or by afflictive providences; see Mal. iii. 2, 3, *He is like a refiner's fire:—He shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness;* Zech. xiii. 9, *And I will bring the third part* of them *through the fire, and refine them as silver is refined.*

This was typified by the levitical purifications: The gold and other metals that were under legal or typical defilements, by having been abused to idolatry by heathens, must pass through the fire to be cleansed and fitted for the use of God's holy people,

and his holy temple; *Numb.* xxxi. 23; whereas those materials which could not bear the fire were to be purified by water for the same service.

In the sixth chapter of the prophecy of Isaiah, where he gives an account of his complaint in the presence of the Lord, *I am a man of unclean lips: Woe is me, for I am undone—my eyes have seen the king, the Lord of hosts,* a seraph took a live coal from the altar of burnt-offering, and laid it upon his mouth, and said, *Lo, this hath touched thy lips, and thine iniquity is taken away; thy sin is purged:* It is hard to say whether this chiefly refers to a pardon of the guilt of past sins of the tongue, or a purification of his lips and heart from sinful disorders. But it is certainly one or both these.

In the last place, I might add another proof that the defilement of sin is not any thing different both from the guilt and disorder of sin, if we consider, that when the guilt of sin is removed by pardon and justification, and the disorder or evil qualities of sin are removed perfectly by sanctification, what is there remaining that can be hurtful to man or offensive to God? It is possible in the nature of things, that the guilt of sin and all obligations to punishment may be taken away from a person by pardoning grace, and yet the impurity or sinful disorder of the soul may remain. It is possible also that the sinfulness or the moral disorder and evil qualities of the soul may be removed by sanctifying grace, and yet the guilt of past sins may remain: But where divine grace hath both pardoned and sanctified the soul completely, there remains no more moral defilement, no sinful pollution, nothing more that can give us either fear or shame, whether we appear before God in the justice of his government, or in the holiness of his nature. This defilement therefore appears evidently to be nothing but a figure of speech borrowed from material things, whereby either the guilt or the disorder of sin, the relative or real evil of it are represented.

Now though this metaphor of the defilement of sin may sometimes signify the guilt, sometimes the disorderly nature of it, yet let it be noted, that the Scripture, in its common forms of speech, does I think, more frequently use or imply the metaphor of filth or pollution* to signify the inherent disorder or real evil that is in sin, than the guilt or relative evil of it; and I believe we may so understand it in most places where such kind of metaphors are used: And consequently when we use this metaphor of defilement, pollution, &c. we should rather apply it to the pravity and disorder of sin than to the guilt of it.

And particularly let it be observed, that wheresoever the guilt of sin and the defilement of sin are mentioned together in the writings of our divines, and represented as distinct and different things, there the guilt evidently signifies that offence against the divine law which subjects us to punishment; and the defilement must mean only that evil quality in sin which is contrary to the divine nature or holiness, which makes us unlike to God, and unfit for his presence, service, or enjoyment.

If this explication of the filth or defilement of sin be admitted, that it sometimes may signify the relative evil, but more frequently and properly the real evil of sin, it will be easy to answer those perplexing questions which some persons have raised about this subject, *viz.*

* *Note,* I think these express words or substantives, *pollution,* &c. are scarce ever used in Scripture, or in human writings, to signify merely the guilt of sin, or the obligation to punishment, without carrying in them the idea of the real evil, or disorder, or culpable demerit of sin.

Question I. Can the defilement of Adam's first sin be transferred to his offspring by imputation?

Answer. If we will speak of the defilement of sin to express the guilt of it, or its relative evil, which exposes us to the just anger of God and to punishment, according to the threatenings of his law; it is evident by the foregoing discourses in this book, that it may be imputed to us, for we suffer a thousand painful evils, and death at the end of them, for the sin of Adam.

But if by the defilement of sin we mean, as we rather ought to do in accurate speech, the real evil of it, or its disorderly nature and contrariety to the image of God in the soul, and as spoiling the best powers of man, unfitting us for converse with God, and naturally tending to our destruction and misery, this is not properly imputed to us from Adam; but this sinful nature is really transferred or derived from Adam to us by the laws of generation or propagation which were given at first to man, as in Questions VI. and VII.

And thence it comes to pass that original sin is divided by our divines into *imputed* and *inherent:* The one is relative, and subjects us to the misery threatened; the other is real, and makes us actually sinful.

Question II. How far was our Lord Jesus Christ, our great surety, concerned in the filth or defilement of our sin?

Some pronounce it boldly that he took upon him the filth and pollution of our sins, though at the same time they mistake and suppose it to mean something really distinct from the guilt. Others again renounce and abominate that thought, lest Christ should be represented as defiled with sin; but at the same time they give no fair account or intelligible notion of the filth of sin, distinct from the guilt of it, that guilt which was certainly imputed to Christ, when "he was made sin for us," and when "he bore our sins in his body on the cursed tree;" 2 *Cor.* v. 21. 1 *Peter* ii. 24.

I think it is evident from many Scriptures,* that our legal subjection to punishment and misery by the guilt of sin, which is the relative evil of it, was imputed or transferred to Christ, and he took it away by offering himself a sacrifice of atonement or expiation, which hath procured pardoning mercy for us: But neither Scripture nor reason will allow that the moral disorder of sin, the vicious impurity or criminal pollution, or real evil of it, was transferred any way to our blessed Saviour, the "holy one of God, who knew no sin." While men of controversy deal much in metaphors they fight in the dark; but if we could persuade them to turn these metaphors into proper expressions, and bring the disputants into clear and open light, they would contend no more.

If we would speak more distinctly and accurately, and without a figure on this subject, I think we should not indulge ourselves to say the "guilt of sin cannot be transferred by imputation, or that the defilement of sin may be imputed to another;" for either of these will be ready to lead those who hear us into some mistake; since, in my opinion, it is evident that the guilt of Adam's sin, or its subjection of the sinner to punishment, was imputed to us, and thereby we are born in sufferings. It is also

* Several Scriptures tell us, that "Christ bore our sins in his own body on the tree," that "he was made sin for us," that "all our iniquities were laid upon him," that "he bare the sins of many," that "his soul was made an offering for sin," &c. Now what is it in or of sin that he bare or took upon him, if not the guilt of it, or our obligation to punishment, or suffering thereby, when he willingly became our surety? There is nothing else of sin that he could be charged or burdened with, or that could be imputed to him, or reckoned to his account, and for which he actually made atonement by his sufferings, and so took away this guilt of sin.

evident that the guilt of our sins was imputed to Christ, for which he suffered and obtained our pardon; but the disorder or evil nature and qualities of sin, which are transmitted to us from Adam by natural propagation, can never be imputed to our blessed Saviour, nor transferred to him any way whatsoever.

Yet to express my charity for all sincere inquirers after truth, I would lay down this conclusion, that if such a sincere, humble, and diligent inquirer will neither acknowledge the guilt of sin capable of being transferred to another by imputation, nor the defilement or sinfulness of nature to be conveyed by propagation, I will not be angry with him, while he allows what I think the sense of Scripture incontestably reveals and maintains, *viz.* that we justly suffer for the sin of Adam in the providence and righteous government of God, that hereby the children of Adam are born with inclinations to sin, and that Jesus Christ the Son of God was justly "made an offering for our sins," being with his own consent devoted to death for us sinners by God the Father.

If Christians will but acknowledge the first Adam was our head, who some way conveyed unto us natural life, sinful inclinations, diseases, and death, according to some righteous divine constitution or covenant, and that Jesus Christ, the second Adam, was also our better head, who conveys to us spiritual life, pardon and justification, resurrection from the dead and immortality, by a new and better covenant; and if they practise the faith, repentance, and new obedience of the gospel, peace be with them all, and everlasting grace in my sincerest wishes, though they do not subscribe to all my words, nor speak precisely the same language with me. Grace and peace be with all those for ever that honestly seek the truths of God, and love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen.

POSTSCRIPT TO THESE ESSAYS.

SOME of the doctrines maintained in this book depend upon a right notion of imputed sin, or a translation of guilt and punishment from one person to another, which I have explained at large in the Second and Third Essays: But there are some writers in the present age who have asserted, that as guilt is entirely personal and can never be transferred, so innocence and punishment are inconsistent ideas: And consequently no sin of Adam can be punished upon his posterity, nor can they be justly laid under misery for any sins of their father: Nor can the sins of any part of mankind be punished upon Jesus Christ, the Mediator.

Those great and eminent writers, the learned Grotius and Dr. Stillingfleet, in their *Defences of the Satisfaction of Christ*, suppose the actual desert of punishment to be personal and inseparable from the agent or actual sinner; but they suppose still that the guilt or obligation to punishment may be transferred from one person to another; that is to say, sin may be imputed as to the punishment thereof to persons who did not actually commit that sin. I suppose all men will allow those authors were very well acquainted with the civil law, as well as with the light of nature and the reason of things; and I must acknowledge I fall in with their sentiments as most consistent with reason and Scripture.

But a certain learned and ingenious writer, who opposes them in these sentiments, maintains, that "there is no such thing as an obligation to punishment, but what consists in a real desert of punishment; nor is there any real guilt but what is personal; and that the punishment of an innocent person, whether with or without his consent, is not only a violation of truth, but is a moral contradiction, for he is no subject of punishment in any respect. No right can be in the universe to punish the innocent, unless there can be a right to violate truth and equity. To punish an innocent person, would be treating him directly contrary to what he is, which is as manifest a violation of truth as can well be conceived." Therefore some infer that the posterity of Adam can never be punished for his sin, nor could our Saviour be punished for the sins of mankind.*

He grants indeed, that the Scripture uses these terms of "Christ's bearing our sins, that he was wounded for our transgressions, and the iniquity of us all was laid upon him," with many other expressions of the like nature: But these expressions, he says, are merely figurative; for, strictly speaking, he could no more bear our punishment, than he could bear our iniquity, or become sin for us, being both alike essentially repugnant in a literal sense to the truth and nature of things.

Thus I have set this objection in the strongest light, and almost in the author's own words; and yet I think it may be effectually answered in this manner:

Answer 1. This ingenious author's assertions concerning "guilt, obligation to punishment, and translation of this obligation, and vicarious punishment" of one for the sins of another, &c. are plainly contrary to the common sense and practice of

* See *An Essay on Redemption, being the Second Part of Divine Rectitude*, page 3—30; by Mr. John Balguy.

mankind, who often punish the crimes of parents on the children, and of offenders on their sureties. This is known more especially by those who are conversant with the civil law on these subjects; I think therefore such assertions ought not to influence our assent, without most evident proof, any more than the assertions of Dr. Stillingfleet and Grotius, and many other writers upon this theme, who express themselves in direct contradiction to what this author maintains.

Is it not a thing very commonly practised amongst men, that the children are banished or disinherited of their father's estate, and become poor and miserable for the sake of their father's treason, or other crimes? Is not something of this kind done in almost every nation, without any complaint of injustice, and without any censure upon the magistrate on this account? And why should it be esteemed utterly unjust in things sacred, that the great God should impute sin to the posterity of Adam, by bringing misery and death upon them? Or that he should impute the sins of mankind to his Son Jesus Christ, who was a voluntary surety, and punish them upon him, which is acknowledged to be the plain, natural, and literal sense of the expressions of Scripture? But we are told, these must be figures and metaphors, because this author does not allow the literal sense to be consistent with truth and justice.

Answer II. This argument, for the same reason, would forbid any rewards to be given to families and posterity, upon the account of great and worthy actions performed by the ancestors: For when the son or grandson of some eminent patriot, or deliverer of his country, has the honours of nobility paid him, which were first given to his father upon his personal merit, this is as much contrary to truth, and as much a falsehood in fact, as if the treasons of a father were punished upon a son. This son or grandson did never perform these glorious and honourable services himself, which is evidently known to the world, and yet the rewards being continued to them, seem to say, that this son or grandson did perform them, in the same sense as this author supposes sufficient to contradict truth, and to destroy all imputation of guilt to another. The translation of rewards in this manner, is as contrary to truth in fact, as a translation of penalties.

Answer III. The force of this argument seems to be all taken from the late Mr. Woollaston's supposed foundation of moral virtue and religion, which is built entirely upon natural or logical truth, in his book of *The Religion of Nature delineated.* Truth, as he supposes, may be expressed in actions as well as in words; and consequently, that all such actions as do not represent things exactly in their natural or logical truth, are falsehoods in fact, or a sort of lies, and therefore unlawful and unjust; being contrary to truth, they are contrary to morality, religion, and justice. But this notion of Mr. Woollaston has never yet been proved to be true, though there are many excellent sentiments found in that treatise.

It is not evident, that God has any where, either by the light of reason or revelation, told us, that actions have the same power to distinguish and determine veracity and falsehood as words have. It has always been granted by our best casuists, that simulation in action, that is, a feint, or disguise, or a mere appearance, or counterfeit of things, may be often good and virtuous, where dissimulation, however it be explained, or falsehood in words, is never lawful or virtuous. But this notion of Mr. Woollaston tends to bring in much superstition, that is, to make more sins than God hath forbidden,

and more duties than God hath prescribed, by making all simulation in action to be unlawful. And if ever that general doctrine should obtain, it stands in need of many cautions and limitations to guard our consciences from endless scruples, or from intrenching upon morality and truth at every turn.

I say yet further, This doctrine seems to forbid all the common conduct even of wise and good men, in covering or disguising any action or design in the civil life, even though the same was practised by our Saviour or his apostles: It renders all stratagems in war immoral and unlawful, even though appointed by God himself. Let us survey this matter a little.

When God ordered Joshua and all Israel to lay an ambush behind the city of Ai, and when by Joshua's command they fled from the battle, and made as if they were beaten, *Joshua* viii. 2, 15; were they guilty of such a falsehood in fact, by their flying when they were not afraid, as turns this action into immorality, or made it unlawful?

When Gideon with three hundred men, whom God had chosen for this purpose, broke their pitchers, discovered their lamps, and sounded their trumpets, *Judges* vii. 16, whereby the host of Midian were led to believe that there were three hundred troops or companies, rather than three hundred men; was Gideon guilty of such a falsehood in fact, as should turn this stratagem into iniquity?

When our blessed Saviour, *Luke* xxiv. 28, walking with some of his disciples toward a village, made as though he would have gone further; did he exert any action by this simulation, which was inconsistent with truth or righteousness? And yet I know not how it can be defended by Mr. Woollaston's principles.

When St. Paul became as a Jew among the Jews, and as a gentile among the gentiles, 1 *Cor.* ix. 20, 21; when he took a vow upon him, and purified himself, *Acts* xxi. 23—26; when he circumcised Timothy, *Acts* xvi. 3; did he falsify truth so as to become criminal?

But to come nearer to the present controversy: When the prophet Elisha pronounced a leprosy upon Gehazi and his seed, for the gross crime of his lying and covetousness, 2 *Kings* v. 27, and when this curse was inflicted upon any of his posterity; did this event say to the world, that these children of Gehazi were guilty of such covetousness and lying too? Or was it not consistent with divine veracity to inflict such a curse?

When Phinehas had executed judgment by slaying two idolaters, and God gave him and his seed the covenant of an everlasting priesthood, *Numb.* xxv. 11, 13, and his children were successively made priests; was here any criminal falsehood in fact, as though each of these children had performed that glorious execution against idolatry?

When the seed of Abraham and Jacob met with many successive blessings from God, upon the account of the special acts of their faith and obedience, which were promised to be thus rewarded; did these numerous blessings on the Israelites declare to the world, that each of these private persons so blessed, were actual performers of those acts of faith and obedience? Or was there any criminal falsehood that belonged to these providences?

In short, a number of such instances might be cited, wherein it is sufficiently evident, that the doctrine of imputed sin and imputed righteousness is by no means to be charged with those consequences, which learned men who follow this scheme would cast upon them.

It may be queried also, whether this learned author doth not allow, that we are pardoned and made happy on the account of what Christ hath done and suffered, so

that the benefit is transferred to us who have never done the meritorious actions? Is this perfectly consistent with the truth of things?

He will say indeed, " that all our blessings are properly a reward to Christ:" But since the reward terminates upon us, may it not justly occasion a doubt, whether this be entirely agreeable to the sentiment of truth and falsehood in actions as the test of all morality and justice?

It must be acknowledged to the honour of this reverend author, who has espoused this notion of Mr. Woollaston's, that he hath argued with just reason and unanswerable force against the deists of the age, and in vindication of the " divine rectitude in creation and providence;" and he hath very ingeniously and happily proved in this same treatise, that " mere repentance and new obedience are not a sufficient ground for sinners to claim pardon and acceptance with God," the universal Governor of the world: But if any such writers should proceed upon these sentiments of Mr. Woollaston, to demolish the divine doctrines of the " translation of guilt, and of vicarious punishment; of our suffering misery and death on the account of the sin of Adam; and of Christ's being a proper sacrifice for the sins of men in his death, and bearing their sins so as to make atonement for them;" I ask leave, with all the respect I bear to their character, to yield up neither my faith, nor my reason to their assertions.

AN

ESSAY

ON THE

FREEDOM OF WILL IN GOD

AND IN

CREATURES,

AND ON

VARIOUS SUBJECTS CONNECTED THEREWITH.

VIZ.

THE IDEAS OF LIBERTY AND NECESSITY;

THE CAUSES OF THE DETERMINATION OF THE WILL; THE USE OF THE UNDERSTANDING TO DIRECT, NOT TO DETERMINE IT;

THE LIBERTY OF GOD AS A CREATOR, A GOVERNOR, AND A BENEFACTOR;

THE DOCTRINE OF FATALITY; THE SPRING OF MORAL GOOD AND EVIL; THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MORAL AND POSITIVE LAWS;

THE SIN AND FALL OF MAN, AND THE FREE GRACE OF GOD;

THE REWARDABLENESS OF FAITH IN THE GOSPEL, AND THE CRIMINAL NATURE OF INFIDELITY.

AN ESSAY

ON THE FREEDOM OF WILL IN GOD AND IN CREATURES.

SECTION I.

OF LIBERTY AND NECESSITY, AND HOW FAR THEY ARE CONSISTENT.

LIBERTY is a word which has been attributed to ideas very distinct and different; and *necessity* has also its various significations: Hence proceeds that confusion and seeming inconsistency which sometimes appears among our thoughts, and may have been found perhaps in some writings on this subject; nor is it easy to avoid it in an argument of so much difficulty: And therefore I bespeak the candour of the reader while I am attempting to strike a little light into a theme, which has been surrounded with much darkness and perplexity.

I shall not run into a wild chase of all the distinctions of *necessity* which the schools have taught us: But it seems to be needful for us to take notice in general, that a thing is called *necessary* when it must be so, and cannot be otherwise, whatsoever be the reason and cause of this necessity.

If the cause or reason of this necessity arise from the very nature of the thing, it is called *an internal* or *natural necessity;* so a bowl may be said necessarily to roll down a hill; and a beast necessarily to avoid the fire, or to quench its thirst when a fountain is near. But if this necessity arise from some apparent outward constraint or restraint, then it is called *an external* or *forcible necessity:* Thus a bowl is driven up hill by the force of a stroke impelling it; or a beast necessarily goes through the fire when he is constrained or dragged into it by outward force; or an ox necessarily abstains from drink when he is withheld by bars or fetters from a neighbouring fountain. What other distinctions of necessity are needful, will afterwards appear.

Liberty stands generally in opposition to necessity of each kind, both inward and outward; both a necessity of nature, and a necessity of force: And that is certainly the best and most proper sense of it; yet there seem to be some cases wherein those actions which are necessary, have also been called free: And if we would make a more careful inquiry into this matter, we must take a brief survey of the different sorts or kinds of liberty, that is, the different cases to which this word is applied, and then we may better judge how far necessity is consistent or inconsistent with it.

I. Liberty or freedom may be attributed in a figurative sense to inanimate beings; so we say by way of simile, "free as the air or wind." It is yet a little more properly applied to animals; so a bird released from its cage is free, or a horse from his bridle or harness. All manner of outward necessity, that is, restraint or constraint, is inconsistent with this freedom of brute creatures. But there are some actions which a beast

performs with a kind of brutal freedom, and yet by a sort of natural necessity also. A horse naturally avoids the fire by an inward necessity, though he doth it freely, that is, with all the freedom he has: And when he is thirsty, he freely drinks, yet it is by an inward or natural necessity, where nothing restrains him.

But leaving these ideas of a less proper freedom, let us rather consider liberty in its more proper sense, as it belongs to men or other intelligent creatures, or to God himself who is the Creator.

II. Liberty, as ascribed to intellectual beings, is either moral or natural. Natural liberty has various ideas, as will appear immediately. Moral liberty is a freedom from all superior authority: In this sense, God alone is universally and perfectly free, having no authority superior to himself. But there are many instances of particular moral freedom among men; an apprentice is free from the authority of his master when he has served seven years; and the lad is free from the government of his tutor when his childhood is past, and he commences man. It is no longer necessary that the apprentice should obey his master's commands, nor the youth those of his tutor, which it was morally necessary or plain duty for them to obey before. In this moral sense, necessity or restraint and liberty are evidently inconsistent.

III. Natural liberty must be distinguished into a liberty of volition, or a liberty of action: The first is a liberty of the will, the last is rather a liberty of the executive powers.* It is this freedom of volition or choosing which is properly the liberty of an intelligent being, and the chief subject of dispute, and not the freedom of the inferior powers from restraint or constraint in acting or executing the determinations of the will. There are many cases wherein the will may be free to choose, but the man is not free to act. The freedom of the will is very consistent with the restraint of action: So a person whose mouth is stopped, may be willing, or choose either to speak or to keep silence; and he is free in this choice, so far as the volition goes; but he is not free to act, for he hath not power to speak if he did choose it; he is under a necessity to keep silence. Suppose *Simon* and *Lepidus* were locked up in prison with their friend *Crato: Lepidus* chooses to go out, but cannot, and is uneasy; *Simon* chooses to tarry there, and there he tarries cheerfully: They are equally free in their different choice and volition; but both are under a necessity to act the same thing, *viz.* to abide in prison, one according to his choice, the other against it.

IV. The liberty of the will is generally distinguished by writers on this subject, into a liberty of indifference or choice, and a liberty of spontaneity or voluntariness.

Actions of the soul are said to be free with this spontaneous or voluntary freedom, when the soul of man pursues any object, or performs any act, or chooses any pleasure, without any consideration whether it can choose any other object, or perform the contrary action. This is a most large and extensive sense of the word *liberty;* for in this sense, every act of the will is and must be free, for every act is spontaneous or voluntary; and, indeed, this freedom of the will seems to be but a dilute idea, for it signifies scarce any thing more than it is an act of the will. So we are said, with the greatest freedom, to do those actions to which we have the strongest inclination, and

* *Note,* When action is contradistinguished from volition, I mean chiefly the action or motion of the inferior and executive powers; for, in the nature of things, the will is the chief agent, and volition is action in the properest sense; but I fear it deviates too much from the sense of mankind to permit the words *action* and *agent* to be applied only to the will, and to nothing else, as some writers have done in this controversy. However, it is but a debate about words.

wherein we take the greatest pleasure; not considering or inquiring whether these actions are necessary or no: That consideration does not come into this notion of liberty. It is a common instance in this case, that all sensible beings with spontaneity and freedom pursue what they call pleasure or happiness; yet they are generally said to do this by a sort of necessity too, because it belongs to their nature, and they cannot do otherwise. This is attributed to brutes as well as men. And so the blessed above, with perfect liberty, love God; yet so constantly, that it appears almost natural and necessary. So God, with the strongest and most exalted freedom, and yet unchangeably and necessarily, loves himself as the highest good, and pursues his own glory as the noblest end. Every necessary and immanent action that God doth with regard to himself, and many transient actions towards his creatures, are perfectly spontaneous and free with an absolute liberty of this kind; and yet, perhaps, he cannot do otherwise, that is, his will naturally, and eternally, and unchangeably determines itself to these actions; he freely and necessarily consults himself in all his designs, and decrees, and always acts agreeably to his own perfections; he is freely and necessarily just and true to his creatures.

I know some great writers distinguish here between a natural and a moral necessity, and call all those actions of the will which are really natural, as well as constant, certain, and universal, such as acts of truth and justice in God, morally necessary; and will allow scarce any thing to be naturally necessary but what belongs to matter, or to the mere passive, or perceptive powers of a spirit: I grant, indeed, that the will, which is influenced by rational motives, is not under such a sort of influence in its actions as bodies are, because bodies are mechanically moved; yet the necessity may be as strong and unalterable: And if it be the very nature of God to act justly and faithfully, so that he cannot will nor act otherwise, it may be called, I think, a natural necessity, since it springs from his nature; as well as it may be called a moral one, because it is the action of an intelligent and free agent.

Now let us inquire what is a liberty of choice or of indifference. Though necessary actions are sometimes said to be free, when they are done thus spontaneously, as I have described, yet a liberty of choice or indifference in things not necessary is the more common sense in which the word *liberty* is used: This is the second branch of this fourth distinction, and this implies " a power to choose or refuse,* to choose one thing or another among several things which are proposed, without any inward or outward restraint, force, or constraining bias or influence." So I feel myself at liberty, and I choose to stand or walk; I am free, and choose either to speak or keep silence, to point upward or downward; I choose one egg and refuse another out of two that are offered. Man is free whether he will choose to honour God his Maker, or dishonour him; to do good to his neighbour, or do him hurt; to keep himself sober, or to make himself drunk: In all these things he may choose or refuse which he pleases. This is

* *Here note,* I do not describe liberty of choice or indifference, as many have done, by a power to act, or not to act, but a power to choose or refuse; for there is a great deal of difference between a freedom of willing or choosing, and a freedom of acting what we choose, as I have shewn before: And much darkness and confusion is brought in upon this subject of liberty, by not keeping this distinction clear. Perhaps that great man, Mr. Locke, had writ more perspicuously on this subject, if he had always maintained this distinction, for he describes liberty, a power to act or not to act, &c.

what the schools call *libertas indifferentiæ ad opposita*, that is, a liberty of indifference to choose one thing or its opposite.

This liberty is utterly inconsistent with all necessity, whether natural or forcible; that is, with all necessity of every kind: Whatsoever is any way necessary, or imposed, or constrained, cannot in this sense be called free. Whensoever the will is necessarily determined to any act or object by any thing without or within itself, it has not a liberty of choice or indifference; for, upon this supposition of its being necessarily determined to one thing, it is evident that it could not choose the contrary.

V. In the last place, liberty, or freedom of the will, is either absolute and perfect, or imperfect and comparative.

When we choose or determine any thing without any manner of constraint on one side, or restraint on the other; when we act or determine one way, without any reluctance or any bias toward the contrary side, this is called absolute and perfect freedom: So God chooses to be just and true; so a wise being chooses to follow the dictates of reason wheresoever they appear; so every sensible being is said to choose and pursue in general what it calls pleasure or happiness, though sometimes it mistakes wherein happiness consists, and follows instead of it a shadow or mischief.

Comparative liberty or freedom is when the mind has some inward reluctance or aversion to those actions which yet it wills to perform for other more prevailing reasons; or when it has an inward inclination and desire to do some action which yet it wills to neglect, being powerfully impelled by other considerations: So a malefactor may be said freely or voluntarily to go to his execution; for though he has an inward aversion to it, yet he chooses it comparatively, that is, rather than to be dragged thither by force: So a sick man is comparatively free in choosing to drink a bitter potion rather than to bear continued sickness.

Now this sort of volition, in common speech, is sometimes said not to be free, because the man doth not absolutely choose this, but only prefers a less evil to a greater; and the words, *not free*, in this place, signify only a less degree of freedom. Men are ready to conclude in this case, that because, in common speaking, the man was constrained, or, as it were, necessitated to go to the gibbet by a superior motive, therefore he went not freely; though indeed it was an act of choice, or comparative freedom, that is, rather than be dragged: And, by this way of speaking, *viz.* that he went not freely, we come also to imagine that freedom and necessity are utterly inconsistent things: Yet it is plain that though here was a sort of necessity or constraint, yet the man was free and voluntary in his own act.

It is no wonder now that there should be such contests and controversies about the nature of liberty, or the use of the word, since it plainly appears that the words, *not free*, sometimes signify only less free; and since the same action may be said, at the same time, to be not free, that is, absolutely, because we do it with some reluctancy, and yet it is said to be free, that is, comparatively, because we do it at last voluntarily, and prefer it before something worse.

We may also take occasion to remark, that if such actions which are not done with a full freedom may be called comparatively free, then there can be no voluntary acts, or acts of the will, but have some natural freedom also, that is, at least a comparative freedom: For the will cannot act without so much freedom as this is; and consequently the will itself cannot be really compelled, but natural freedom or liberty will

still belong to it in all possible actions; though not always a liberty of choice or indifference.

After all this debate, I will readily acknowledge, that some of these disputes, whether such and such actions are free or no, are rather disputes about words than things: And if the world would all agree to confine the words liberty and freedom to signify nothing but a freedom of choice, a liberty of indifference, or a power to choose or refuse, which is inconsistent with any necessity of choice, and which must be allowed to be the most usual sense of it, I should be so far from disapproving of it, that I think it would be the best way of speaking and writing. And therefore I give notice here, that I shall chiefly use the word *freedom* in this sense in the following Sections. If we could but always confine every term to one certain determinate idea, we should gain and preserve much clearer ideas of things; we should make much swifter and larger advances in knowledge; we should cut off a thousand occasions of mistake, and take away a multitude of controversies. But when we are inquiring, what is liberty or freedom, which in the present sense and use of the word among mankind is applied to various cases, we must not explain the word so as utterly to exclude any spontaneous actions, or actions of the will, which men have frequently called free, though they also may appear necessary, or in some sense constrained.

Among other remarks on this subject, it is proper also to take notice, that our judging concerning the truth or falsehood, fitness or unfitness, good or evil of things, is generally ascribed to that power of the soul which is called the mind or understanding: And because when we do pass a judgment, we have no power to judge otherwise than as things appear to the mind at that time, therefore judgment is called a necessary thing; and indeed judgment is but an assent or dissent of the mind as things appear true or false to the mind; and on this account it is supposed to have no freedom or liberty belonging to it. But if we will make a careful observation of what passes in the transactions of the soul on these occasions, we shall find that though the mind cannot assent or dissent, cannot judge of things contrary to what they plainly appear, yet the will has a great deal to do in our judgments concerning objects proposed to the mind.

The will is sometimes led by appetite or passion, and has an inclination to choose a particular object, and then it wishes that object to be fit and good: It readily yields to the prejudices that lie on that side, it fixes the mind upon those arguments, which tend to prove what it wishes, and turns the thoughts away from those evidences, which lie on the other side of the question, and does not suffer them to be brought into full view and comparison; and thus secretly it influences the soul to judge the thing it desires to be good or fit, that is, to assent to those arguments, which are brought to prove its fitness, keeping the contrary arguments much out of sight. It is an old Roman proverb, *Quod volumus facilè credimus*, "We easily believe that which we wish to be true:" There is indeed a secret dishonesty and insincerity in this conduct, though we are not willing to take notice of it.

The will also has power to hasten and precipitate our fixed assent or dissent to propositions in the mind, and to hurry on the judgment to determine concerning the fitness or goodness of things upon a slight and insufficient view. The soul of man is soon tired and weary of suspense, and the will hastening to choice and action before due evidence, is

really guilty of that rash judgment and rash action: For the will has power to withhold the assent in many cases, and to delay the judgment where things do not appear to the mind with full and bright evidence, and to set the mind upon searching further, and viewing the object again on all sides, before it judges concerning its truth, fitness, or goodness: And by this means the will may take care that the soul pass a juster judgment on things, after a fuller and longer survey of them. And even where things appear with a pretty good degree of evidence, the will is able to delay our assent, and withhold it for a season; as for instance, if any learned and knowing friend stand by and warn us of danger and mistake, and bid us take heed of assenting too soon, lest we are imposed upon by false appearances, the will is able to prolong the delay of the judgment, and to withhold it from pronouncing upon the fitness or goodness of that object.

Let it be observed, that I do not alter our common forms of speech, nor attribute judgment to the will, though indeed it seems to be some determining operation of the soul, consequent to the appearances of ideas in the mind; and therefore it is not merely what some great writers have represented it, *viz.* "feeling what we feel, or hearing what we hear;" for we can suspend and delay our assent or judgment, even when a good degree of evidence appears to the mind; and we are also led sometimes to give a stronger or weaker assent, according to the inclinations of the will, or desires of the heart, neither of which can be properly said with regard to feeling or hearing.

I say again, I will not directly call judging, an act of choice or voluntary operation; and yet there is so much of this kind of operation in the soul exerted about its passing a judgment on things, that I think we must agree that the will has a great deal to do in it; and therefore the errors derived from these wilful rash judgments, have something criminal in them, as well as they lead us into farther criminal actions. And were not this the true account of things, I cannot see how faith or unbelief of the gospel could have any thing in them worthy either of praise or blame: But this is only a hint by the way.

Mr. Locke, in his *Essay*, Book II. Chapter XXI. Section 47, after some other representations of human liberty, which seem not to be perfectly just, represents it "to consist much in a power of delaying the execution of our desires, or suspending the acts of volition or choice, until the man has diligently examined on all sides what is best:" Now this no doubt is a very great part of human liberty; and Des Cartes, the French philosopher, with good appearance of reason, makes this power of suspending the acts of the soul to extend to our assent to truth, as well as to the pursuit of good; and therefore he proceeds so far as to make judgment rather to belong to the will, and to be justly laudable or blame-worthy. Mr. Locke seems also to come pretty near to the opinion which I have proposed, as appears in the prosecution of this discourse of his about our judgments of good and evil, and our choice and practice consequent thereon; on which subject he has many excellent thoughts in morality.

SECTION II.

WHAT DETERMINES THE WILL TO CHOOSE OR ACT.

LET us now consider the human will, in the common sense of it, as that power of the soul whereby we choose or refuse what is proposed to the mind. The usual principles which are supposed by philosophers to be causes of the determination of the will to act, in choosing one thing, or in refusing another, are chiefly these three, *viz.* "The greatest apparent good as it is discovered to the mind," or, "the last dictate of the understanding;" or "the removal of some uneasiness." Let us consider these three particularly.

First, "The greatest apparent good." This does not properly mean moral good, or virtue, but natural good, or that which most conduces to our ease, pleasure, or happiness. Now this greatest apparent natural good, as it is discovered to the understanding, and considered as the cause which certainly influences and determines the will, doth not differ really from the last assent or dictate of the understanding* considered in this same view of influence: For it is the last assent of the understanding concerning the apparent goodness of a thing, which is supposed to determine the will to choose it, and therefore these two are really but one thing under different names or appearances; and as such I shall consider them.

Now, among other evidences or proofs that the greatest apparent good does not always determine the will to choose or act, I shall mention but these three.

1. If the greatest apparent good always and necessarily determines the will to choose it, then the will is never free with a liberty of choice or indifference; for things placed in such a certain view, or seen in such a certain light, will necessarily appear to that individual understanding, and at that time in such a particular manner, *viz.* as fit or unfit, as good or evil, as a greater or lesser good; and consequently such appearances to the understanding, will, according to this hypothesis, necessarily determine the will to choose this greatest appearing good. And this is the very scheme of the fatalists, whereby they prove all human actions to be necessary, and that there is no such thing as freedom of choice in any intelligent being whatsoever: And, according to this hypothesis, it will not be easy to give a fair and satisfactory answer to the arguments which the fatalists bring against all our notions of moral good and evil, if all human actions are in this manner necessary: But of this more hereafter.

2. The greatest apparent good does not always determine the will; for there are many persons convinced that future happiness, pursued in a way of piety and virtue, is really the greatest natural good: This appears very plain to their understanding, and yet their will chooses present sensualities and vicious pleasures, and pursues them in opposition to this greatest apparent good, and the last dictate of their understanding about it. The power of the will to choose and act in this case continues the same, after the last dictate of the understanding, as it did before; and in weak and foolish creatures, the will sometimes exerts this power by acting and choosing contrary to it.

Some indeed will say, that in this case the mind or understanding being influenced

* "The last assent of the understanding," perhaps, is a better term, because "the last dictate" seems to denote too much of action, whereas the understanding is represented properly as a passive power.

and blinded by sensual appetite, makes a rash judgment, and then the understanding finally dictates that for this present moment vicious pleasure is the greatest good, and is to be preferred, and so the will pursues it.

But I rather think, it is the violence of appetite or passion, that many times biasses and inclines the will strongly, yet not necessarily, to follow vicious pleasure; and this it does without changing the dictate of the understanding, or convictions of the mind about the greatest apparent good, but rather overpowering them by present influences; according to the old poet, *video meliora proboque, deteriora sequor.* Ask the vicious man when he wills and chooses to pursue his lusts contrary to the convictions of his mind and conscience, whether his conscience be not still convinced that it is better to pursue virtue, that is, not only morally better, or more agreeable to the will of God, but it is naturally better as it conduces to a greater natural good, or final happiness; and he will frequently confess it, that considered as a natural good, the practice of virtue, with all its consequences of future or final happiness, is better than vice with its consequences of final misery: But his strong passions and present appetites hurry on his will to choose vice before virtue, and thus contradict the dictates of the understanding or conscience concerning the greatest apparent good, both natural and moral. Mr. Locke, in his *Essay*, Book II. Chapter XXI. Sections 35, 38, 43, 44, talks more copiously on this subject, and confirms what I have here expressed.

And let it be considered, that if things be not as I have here represented them, but if on the contrary, the will cannot choose vice unless the last dictate of the understanding determine that vice is at present the greatest apparent good, or vice is to be preferred and pursued, and if then the will must obey the understanding, and choose sensual vices; then there is no such thing as sin against the convictions of the mind, or the last dictates of the understanding; which is a very absurd proposition, and contrary to all experience; and it frees the criminal from all blame even in the sight of God, who has formed his nature and his powers in this connection.

3. My last reason to prove that the last dictate of the understanding, or the greatest apparent good, does not always determine the will, is, because sometimes, two things are proposed to the will, wherein the understanding can give no dictate, because it sees no manner of difference, or at least no superior fitness, nor can possibly represent one as a greater good than another; and here the will cannot be determined by the understanding. Of this I shall say more afterward.

Other philosophers, and particularly Mr. Locke, supposes "uneasiness to be the great principle of all the determinations of the will." See his *Essay*, Book II. Chapter XXI. Section 29, 33—39. But I think it may be proved that the will is not always determined by some uneasiness, as I shall shew immediately: Yet by the way I may take notice, that wheresoever uneasiness doth determine the will, this does very little differ from the former principle, *viz.* that it is determined by the greatest apparent good; for this uneasiness proceeds, as Mr. Locke confesses, from the absence of some natural good; and the will determines itself to pursue this absent good, in order to remove this uneasiness. Thus it is good apprehended by the mind in its last dictates, that in these cases is still supposed to determine and direct the will.

Or thus: The removal of this present uneasiness is itself the greatest apparent good, and if the will be determined to act thus or thus for the removal of this present uneasiness, then it is still determined by the greatest apparent good.

In the thirty-third and forty-second sections, Mr. Locke himself grants, " that it is good that determines the will, though not immediately;" and his doctrine seems to be this, *viz.* " that good, as it is apt to produce ease and pleasure in us, is the object of our desire; and it is this desire of good, raised by the present uneasiness in the want of it, that determines the will." Does it not then follow, that uneasiness is the remote mover of the will, and desire of good the proxime mover of it? I see no great difference between this and the common opinion, nor ground enough for that great opposition between his doctrine in this point, and the common doctrine, which he seems to represent in two whole sections; for in the acts of the mind, which are instantaneous, and many, as it were, are sometimes crowded into a moment, such as an uneasiness under the absence of good, and a desire of its presence, &c. it is difficult sometimes to say, this or that is first or last: However in this place it is the view and desire of good is allowed to be the next and most immediate mover of the will, I think, by Mr. Locke's own arguing.

Mr. Lee, in his notes upon Mr. Locke, gives some probable arguments against his opinion, and proves that uneasiness is not the sole motive to voluntary actions.

This uneasiness, saith he, is a trouble, a kind of pain, a natural evil, and seems rather to be the spring of animal actions and of vicious acts, than of such as are exercises of virtue, and piety, and charity; and thus it is rather the motive to the wills of the worst or meanest of men, than to noble and virtuous spirits. So the fear of evil is the motive to the vilest of men to various actions and abstinences; but love to do as well as receive good, moves the best-constituted minds. This doctrine of uneasiness seems to govern the actions of men by the principle of brutes, for they are carried by hunger and thirst and uneasiness towards their natural actions: Therefore it is more honourable and safe to ascribe at least all virtuous actions to a diviner principle.

To this, let me add another reason or two, to make it more evident that this uneasiness can never be the universal and constant cause of determining the will.

Suppose a man is pleased and easy, and perfectly satisfied in his present circumstances, be it in his present habitation, in his company, in his manner of life, in his trade and business, or any thing else: I would ask, What is it determines him to will his continuance in these circumstances, his abiding in the same habitation, his conversing with the same company, &c.? Is it any uneasiness that determines him? Is it not rather his present easiness and sense of pleasure that moves him to will the continuance of his present ease? And Mr. Locke confesses this in Section 34. Now I would ask whether a will to continue be not a volition, as well as a will to change?

Again, Is it uneasiness that determines the blessed God, and all the holy and happy spirits in heaven, to do what they do? Would it not have a profane sound to say, That present uneasiness determined God to make beasts and men, birds and flowers, to create a heaven and an earth? Can we believe that present uneasiness determines every angel to choose and love God the chief good, or to will the several actions wherein he obeys his Maker, and executes his orders? Or that it is some present uneasiness that causes the saints in heaven to perform their several acts of duty and adoration, or to will their continuance in the service and enjoyment of God?

Upon the whole, it is granted that these three principles, *viz.* " The greatest apparent good, the last dictate of the understanding, or the removal of present uneasiness,"

whether you suppose them distinct or the same, may have a persuasive influence so far as to prevail upon and to incline the will of men to far the greatest part of their volitions or acts of choice: But we have proved that these are not the universal and certain or necessary principles of all the will's determinations.

Let us inquire now whether there are not many instances wherein the will is determined neither by present uneasiness, nor by the greatest apparent good, nor by the last dictate of the understanding, nor by any thing else, but merely by itself as a sovereign and self-determining power of the soul: Or whether the soul does not will this or that action in some cases, not by any other influence but because it will, and perhaps to shew its own sovereignty or self-determining power. Let us put this case: Suppose I have a mind to prove to an atheist, or a fatalist, that I am a free being, for I can turn my face to the south or the north, I can point with my finger upward or downward, just as I please, and according as my soul wills; and that I have a power to will and choose which of these motions I shall perform: Now if to demonstrate this freedom, I determine to move my finger upward, or turn my face to the north, it is not because I was under any present uneasiness by standing still without motion; nor was the pointing upward or the looking northward a greater apparent good than looking to the south or pointing downward: Nor could my understanding dictate one rather than the other: But it was a mere arbitrary volition, to shew that I have within me this self-determining power. And thus in some cases the will determines its own actions in a very sovereign manner because it will, and without a reason borrowed from the understanding; and hereby it discovers its own perfect power of choice rising from within itself, and free from all influence or restraint of any kind. And perhaps this may be as good a way to resolve some difficulties that relate to the actions of choice, and liberty of the will, either in God or in man, as any other laborious methods of solution which have not attained the desired success, nor satisfied the inquiring part of mankind. I will not deny but that I am indebted to archbishop King, in his *Treatise of the Origin of Evil*, many years ago, for my first thoughts of this kind: And in my review of these papers, I am confirmed in these sentiments by an English translation of that book in quarto, with ingenious notes upon it by a writer who conceals his name, printed in 1731.* Though I ask leave in some points to differ from the sentiments of the archbishop in that treatise.

SECTION III.

THE WILL IS A SELF-DETERMINING POWER.

LET us see whether this doctrine of the self-determining power of the will may not be formed into a regular scheme, attended with various advantages, and guarded against the most formidable objections, in the following manner:

Proposition I. In every spirit or thinking being, whether perfect or imperfect, finite or infinite, there are two such principles or powers as may properly be distinguished by our conceptions, into *the understanding* and *the will.*

These are by no means to be conceived as two real substances, or proper distinct

* Since this was written, there is another edition of that book in octavo, with valuable amplifications and corrections, and the learned author, Mr. Edmund Law, has no longer concealed his name.

beings; for it is one and the same spirit that both understands and wills: And yet we have very clear and distinct ideas of these two principles or powers of agency in ourselves, *viz.* We have a power of perceiving and assenting to truth, and of seeing and taking notice of the fitness or unfitness, the goodness or evil of things; this is called *the understanding*, or sometimes *the mind:* And we have also a power of willing or choosing one thing, and refusing another, of preferring one thing before another, of determining our choice to one thing rather than another; and this is called *the will.*

As we are evidently and strongly conscious of these powers in ourselves, so we reasonably ascribe the same to other spirits, supposing them to be of a similar constitution: And we are taught also to form the same ideas of God, our Maker, whom the light of nature and Scripture represent to us as *a Spirit*, and we are made after *his image*, as well as are *his offspring;* John iv. 24. Gen. i. 26. Acts xvii. 28.

Proposition II. The eternal reason and nature of things seem to point out this practical truth to us, or rather this rule of action, *viz.* that where a being is possessed of two such powers, one of them, *viz.* the understanding, which perceives the fitness or unfitness, good or evil of things, should be a director or guide to the other power which is active, *viz.* the will, that it may regulate and determine its actions wisely, and choose and refuse objects proposed to it according to the fitness or unfitness, good or evil, which is discovered by the understanding: And that wheresoever greater degrees of fitness or goodness are discovered by the understanding in any object, there also the will should determine its choice rather than to objects less fit, or less good.

Proposition III. But where there is no such superior fitness or goodness in things, or where it cannot be discovered by the understanding, but the objects which are proposed appear equally fit or good, there the will is left without a guide or director: And therefore it must make its own choice only by its own determination, it being properly a self-determining power. And in such cases the will does as it were make a good to itself by its own choice, that is, creates its own pleasure or delight in this self-chosen good; though it be not abstractly and in itself better, that is, fitter than it was before: Even as a man by seizing upon a spot of unoccupied land in an uninhabited country, makes it his own possession and property, and as such rejoices in it. Where things were indifferent before, the will finds nothing to make them more agreeable than they were, considered merely in themselves, besides the pleasure it feels arising from its own choice, and its perseverance therein. We love many things which we have chosen, and purely because we choose them.

Let us survey these two cases supposed in the second and third propositions a little more particularly. And, first, let us consider the case where some superior fitness or goodness doth appear to the understanding.

Proposition IV. If the thinking being or spirit be wise or perfect, then it will act according to that eternal rule of action which rises from reason and the nature of things; that is, whatsoever the understanding apprehends and judges to have a greater or superior fitness or goodness in it, the will being guided by the understanding, prefers and determines itself to choose it, and refuseth the things that appear less fit, as well as those which are unfit or evil. This it doth constantly and certainly, so far as the being is wise; for this is one chief thing wherein consists the perfection or wisdom of a spirit, *viz.* to choose and prefer what appears to be fit and good above what is

unfit or evil, and also to choose that which is better or more fit, above that which has less fitness or goodness.

Proposition V. Though the will of intelligent beings is generally and should be always led or influenced by the greatest fitness and goodness of things wheresoever it appears to the understanding, yet it is not necessarily and absolutely determined thereby: For the will of an unwise being may possibly determine itself without regard to the understanding, and even contrary to what the mind judges to be fit or good.

And it may do this many ways, *viz.* by negligence, by sudden humour, caprice, or wantonness: The will through these influences may suddenly and rashly prefer evil to good, or that which is less fit to what is more fit. Or the will may be tempted and led away to choose what is not really good, by the enticing and soliciting powers of strong appetite or passion, contrary to the judgment of the understanding. It is true indeed, the will may choose and determine to resist those importunate passions, but it is true also that it may obey them without regarding the mind, or in opposition to the better dictates of the understanding: For though the mind is given us for a director or adviser, yet not as an absolute lord or ruler. It is the will that is properly the moral principle or agent within us, the proper subject of virtue or vice, and therefore it must be a free and a self-determining power, and must choose of itself, whether it will follow reason or appetite, judgment or passion.

And therefore it is, that whensoever the will determines contrary to the dictates of the understanding or conscience, it is both unwise and highly criminal, because such a spirit acts directly contrary to the light or law of nature, the great rule of reason, and the appearing fitness of things: And this gives just occasion to sharp reproaches and torments of conscience, when the will has determined contrary to the dictates of conscience, that is, of the understanding.

Proposition VI. Though sins against conscience are too frequently committed, yet the chief reason why imperfect beings so often choose unfit or evil things, and prefer them to what are fit and good, is not merely from this negligent humour, or a wanton and capricious turn of the will, or the mere compliance with violent appetite or passion in determining its choice contrary to appearing fitness or goodness, as represented by the understanding; but it arises perhaps most frequently from the understanding apprehending and judging some things to be fit or good upon a slight view of them, which really are not so, and from the will's inclination or wish, through the false bias of appetite or passion, that such a thing should be fit and good, before mature examination, and from its determining to search no farther; the will precipitates the judgment, hurries it into error, and acts and chooses rashly upon present slight appearances.

And indeed in this case the will, which might yet longer suspend the judgment by putting the understanding upon a farther search, is criminal in permitting a judgment to pass on things upon such slight appearances of fitness or goodness, and determining its choice according to them, instead of delay and further search and inquiry.

Mankind, of whom I chiefly speak here, are often led astray in this matter by the false representations which passion and appetite, sense and fancy make of things to the understanding. We commit many mistakes about the fitness or goodness of things, by seeing them in a deceiving situation, in a false light, and under a disguise; by beholding things but in part and in an imperfect manner, by the numerous prejudices of many kinds that lead imperfect creatures astray in their judgment of things. And we are

generally too ready to pass a rash and hasty judgment and determination of what is fit and good, before a thorough examination. We soon grow weary of a state of suspense and doubt about the fitness or goodness of things: And there is often found an impatience in the will to determine itself one way or another with speed, as well as an inclination that such a thing should appear fit and good according to the bias of sense and appetite; and thus it often chooses evil instead of good.

Proposition VII. Indeed, if we happen to pass a false judgment from the mere imperfection of our natural capacities, or under the influence of any of these prejudices which we had no manner of means nor power to resist or subdue; this mistake of judgment, and the unhappy choice of the will according to it, seem to be innocent, and merit no blame.

But when we give up ourselves to a rash determination of judgment or choice under such prejudices as might be resisted, or when we yield to this impatience of the will, and wilfully neglect a further search where we might have justly delayed and searched further, and by this means our will prefers real evil to good, or chooses things less fit before things which are more fit, we herein become culpable: And this faultiness hath greater or less degrees, according to the different opportunities, advantages, and capacities we had to examine, judge, and choose aright.

And let it be observed, that as unwise spirits determine amiss in their judgment and choice of things, through haste or rashness, or through a sudden and strong bias of appetite or passion, &c. so a spirit which is wise may, through unwatchfulness, suffer itself to be betrayed into such a rash and false judgment, and such an unhappy and criminal action, and choose evil instead of good. And perhaps this was the true spring of the fall of man from his state of innocence, and the entrance of sin into the world.

Hitherto we have spoken chiefly concerning the determination and choice of the will in those cases where the understanding represents one thing as fitter and better than another: But let us now consider the case supposed in the third Proposition, where there is no such superior fitness or goodness, or where it doth not appear to the understanding.

Proposition VIII. There may be several things proposed to the understanding even of a wise and knowing, but imperfect, spirit, wherein the superior fitness or unfitness is concealed, and doth not sufficiently appear to the understanding, so as to give any just and certain direction to the will which of them to choose or refuse. In some cases it is plain that the understanding, after all proper surveys and inquiries, is left in perfect suspense about the greater or lesser fitness of things, and the will may be perfectly indifferent to them: And yet the will may without fault or folly determine itself to choose the one or the other: As for instance, if I am hungry, and two pieces of bread, or two cakes lie before me, which appear to be equally good for food, at equal distance from me, and in all other circumstances have no discernable inequality, so that I am entirely indifferent to either of them in particular, yet my will may determine itself to choose and eat one of them to satisfy my hunger; but which of the two I shall choose must be determined by the mere act of my will, for I cannot stay an hour in suspense and trifling inquiries. Perhaps one of these pieces of bread might be really in itself much fitter for my nourishment than the other; or perhaps there might be secret poison in the one, and not in the other; but I knew it not; they were equal to me in appearance, and therefore I was not led to determine my choice by any superior appearance of fitness or

goodness; yet my will determined itself to choose one of them because it is a self-determining power, and hath perfect freedom of choice within itself: And herein there is nothing foolish or criminal, even though I should happen to be poisoned by it, by taking that piece which was unfit for my nourishment.

Proposition IX. As there may be several things proposed to a very wise and intelligent being, wherein he can discern no superior fitness or goodness, so there may be some things proposed wherein there is really no superior fitness or goodness at all; yet it may be fit at particular seasons that one of them should be chosen. This is a common case; as when two bricks, suppose them called A and B, lie before a builder, which are equally fit to fill up such a vacancy in the wall, and both lie equally near his hand, and are equal in every other appearing circumstance; the builder must not stay an hour to debate with himself and to determine which brick to choose for filling up this vacancy; that would be folly indeed: But his will freely and of itself chooses the brick A, merely because he will, and leaves B, or refuses it: Then, as I hinted before, this brick A becomes so far better by his choosing it, as that he approves of it in its place in the building above any other, and delights in his own choice or work.

Or take another instance: Suppose a man be desired to shew his power in self-determination, or of pointing with his finger, and he points to the north, or to the east, to the heavens or to the earth; here is no superior fitness or unfitness in the one or the other, but he points upward, or northward as he pleases; his will determines for no other reason but because he will, and thereby shews his own self-determining power in all this; though it be perfectly arbitrary, yet there is nothing foolish or faulty.

We may find instances of this kind in moral actions as well as natural: Suppose God requires Abraham to offer a lamb out of his flock in sacrifice, and Abraham taking a survey of the twenty fattest lambs of his flock, cannot find which is the best of them; his own will must finally determine and choose any one of them for the altar. Or let it be supposed that I have ten farthings in my purse, and I meet with a dozen beggars, all so equally poor and miserable, that I cannot discern which is the most or which is the least indigent: I must necessarily leave two of these men out of my distribution, but my understanding cannot direct me which these two are, nor can it tell me which are the ten fittest objects of my charity. What can determine my choice here but my own will by its self-determining power?

The understanding in such instances as these, has no pretence of power to direct or determine the will, because it sees no superior fitness, and the will would be for ever undetermined, if it did not determine itself.

SECTION IV.

HOW THE WILL OF GOD DETERMINES ITSELF.

Now let us try to apply these things to the great and blessed God in his counsels and actions; always remembering, that when we speak of these divine and unsearchable themes, we do not pretend nor assume so much as to determine that things must be literally just so transacted in the divine counsels, but that we speak of God as acting according to the manner of men, and so far as our ideas can reach those sublimities.

Proposition X. The great God, whose understanding is perfect, sees all the real and

possible fitnesses and unfitnesses, good or evil, which are in things, as they are contained in his own eternal ideas: He beholds all that is fit or unfit, whether the things themselves are actually existent, or only possible, because he sees all the infinite relations of things to one another, with all their consequences, in a simultaneous and comprehensive view.

Here note, That I do not meddle with the debate whether there can be any fitness or goodness in things antecedent to, or abstracted from the being of a God. Had there not been a God, there had never actually existed such real fitnesses, nor such ideas at all. Yet it is certain we may conceive of such fitnesses antecedently to our conception of the being of a God. This is plain and evident, that God is eternal, and his ideas are eternal, and these fitnesses of things also are eternal: And perhaps these fitnesses of things can have no original existence nor eternity but in the divine ideas, and consequently are included in the unchangeable nature of God.

And this is one argument whereby, as I remember, the late ingenious Mr. Norris somewhere proves the being of a God, *viz.* that there are certain eternal truths or propositions, natural, mathematical, and moral, such as, "three and three make six; two parallel lines will never meet; the whole is greater than any of its parts; and God is to be honoured by his intelligent creatures." Now these eternal unchangeable truths are not a mere nothing, and therefore they must have an eternal existence somewhere, and this cannot be but in some eternal mind, which is God. But however that matter be resolved, this is certain, that all these eternal fitnesses lie open to the divine mind, and are part of his unchangeable ideas, which is all that my present argument requires.

Proposition XI. When we consider or speak of the decrees of God, or his determinations what he will do, or what he will not do, we are constrained to acknowledge that his will always chooses and determines to act what is fit and good: That is, in our way of conceiving, wheresoever there is an eternal fitness or unfitness, good or evil in things, he always determines to act according to this fitness and this goodness; for to act an unfit thing would be unwise, and to act a thing which is evil, would not be good; whereas the blessed God is perfectly wise and perfectly good in all his works and his decrees, in his creation and providence, and government of the world: He is faithful to his promises, he is righteous and just in his determinations, he is kind in his conduct towards his creatures so far as the rules of wisdom and justice admit: Nor is it possible that God should be or act otherwise than according to this fitness, where there is any fitness or goodness in things, since these eternal and unchangeable fitnesses exist in his ideas, and for God to act against them, would be unfit and unwise, and unbecoming the character and nature of a God.

Proposition XII. For the same reason, his will exerting itself in a way of government, determines all the rules of moral virtue and piety for the practice of his creatures, according to the original and eternal fitness of things, wheresoever there is such an eternal fitness. As for instance, that "God our Creator is to be honoured, and loved, and worshipped, and obeyed; that promises and contracts are to be fulfilled; that one man must not take away another man's life or property by force or fraud," &c. All which are moral propositions of eternal truth.

Proposition XIII. God has made these moral rules known to men to be his will two ways, *viz.* by reason and by revelation.

1. "By reason," that is, by forming their natural powers of thinking and reasoning in such a manner, that when they set themselves to a careful and due consideration of the

relation of God to his creatures, and of creatures to one another, they cannot but infer these propositions to be true, and to be most proper rules to govern their practice; and that God, who has formed their reasoning powers in this manner, has hereby made these things their duty. As our reason is so formed, that in natural things it is impossible we should judge otherwise than that "three and three make six," or "the whole is greater than a part;" so in moral things we cannot judge otherwise, when we have the idea of a God, than "that God our Maker is to be honoured and worshipped," &c. And when our reason judges thus, then it appears to be the will of God, and we are obliged to perform and obey it as our Maker's will.

2. "By revelation," or Scripture, God has also manifested these rules of moral virtue, or natural religion, and thus confirmed the law of nature, or dictates of reason, and given a double discovery of these duties to those who live where this revelation is published, and a double obligation to the performance of them.

Here let it be observed, that I enter not into the controversy, "Whether these moral propositions about eternal fitnesses of things would have the force of laws, and carry any proper obligation with them upon the mind and will of man, without the consideration of the existence of God, and of his will thus found out by our reasoning powers." I am rather inclined to think that it is the will of God, as manifested by reason or revelation, which lays the true and proper moral obligation on the practice of intelligent creatures; but I avoid the embarrassing my present scheme of thoughts with that dispute. It is evident enough, that in the grand lines of moral virtue and piety there are these eternal fitnesses; and our reasoning powers, when they have found out the being of a God, and our relation to him, must also acknowledge they are so far the will of God, that we are obliged to practise according to these moral fitnesses, these eternal rules of virtue.

Proposition XIV. But there may be several things supposed to come within the view of the divine mind, or the understanding of God, considered as a Creator, which have no real fitness or goodness in themselves, or at least which have all an equal fitness or equal goodness to answer any general or special design of God: And if they are considered in all the various relations in which they stand either to God himself, or to other things in the universe, there is no real superior fitness or goodness in any of them above the rest, so that they appear perfectly indifferent in the divine ideas.

Now in such instances the will of God, as a sovereign agent, has no determination from his own ideas, and therefore in and of itself determines itself to choose one thing and not another; and, as it were, makes that thing good, that is, makes it pleasing to himself, by his own determination or choice of it. Wheresoever the infinite knowledge of God sees no goodness nor evil in the ideas of things themselves, he can make them so far good by fixing his own free-will and choice upon them, that they then are agreeable and pleasing because of his free choice, which before were entirely indifferent. And I think we may, without injury to the dignity of godhead, suppose him to be better pleased now with those his works which he has actually wrought or determined into actual existence, than with those which he has left in the state of mere possibility, though antecedent to this determination they might be both equally fit or good.

And indeed there seems to be a great number of instances of this kind relating to God and his works: As, What sort of system of beings he would make, and whether minds, bodies, or both? What should be the precise shape, and what the precise place

of every corporeal being in the world? Whether this whole universe, or the sun in our system, should have one atom in it more or less? Whether the whole or any part of it should have been created one moment sooner or later? In what precise spot of our solar world Jupiter or Saturn, or any of their satellites, or this earth or its moon should be first placed; or whether any of them should have one particle of matter more or less in them, than they have, or this or that particle lie in any other situation? Whether this single atom of mould or clay should be part of the glebe at Taunton or York; or whether this grain of sand or pebble should be found on the shore of Deal or Dover, or on the coasts of Africa or the East Indies?* Whether this particle of water should belong to the Severn or the Thames, or should be flowing this moment in the Atlantic or the Mediterranean sea; or whether this particle of air should be found in Essex, or Hertfordshire, or in America, on this day, this hour, and this second of time? On what particular branch such a bird should sit at such a minute, and what notes it should sing; and how many leaves should grow on such a bough, and how many indentings on the edge of every leaf: How many colours should glow on the cheek of such a tulip, or yellow seeds lie in the bosom of a rose: Whether this particular human soul should be united to a body born in Lapland or Russia, Britain or China; or this child should be created for a tall statue or a dwarf, or be brought into the world in the seventh or seventeenth century: Whether this drop of rain should fall upon a ploughed field or a rock, or this bright sunbeam should light on me or my neighbour, on the earth or the moon? And perhaps ten thousand other things, and that of much greater importance in their consequences, may have no superior fitness or unfitness in themselves, but are all equal and all indifferent. And here the will of God, by and of itself, as a free and sovereign power, determines itself in its choice, and as it were makes it so far more agreeable and good to himself by his own choice and determination, and he delights in his own will and purpose, and in the correspondent works of his hands.

Proposition XV. When God out of mere sovereignty and good pleasure hath determined by his will to choose and create one sort of world or system of things out of two or two thousand which perhaps were equally fit, or to make this or that sort of creatures in this world; he then may be said to be led by the nature and relations of those things, and by consequential proper fitnesses which belong to that system, or to those creatures, to determine those things of a natural or moral kind, which are proper for those creatures, or for that system. As for instance: Supposing just such a world to be created as ours is, then perhaps consequentially it must have such laws of motion: Or, if man be created exactly such a being as he is, then it is proper that he should have such ideas, such notions and sentiments, &c. and that he should live under such certain laws and rules of action.

But perhaps several of these are not eternal laws or rules either of nature, or motion, or morality to other sorts of creatures, or other systems which God might have chosen to create. Therefore though we may assert some to be eternal laws or rules for all possible worlds, yet it is hard for us to say in all cases, how far these eternal fitnesses

* I have dwelt too long perhaps on such minute and inconsiderable instances as these; but I did it partly to intimate how universally the great God is laid under necessary and minute limitations, if these things were not indifferent; and partly to give occasion to diffuse our thoughts into like instances in the animate, human, and angelic worlds, which perhaps are as little and indifferent in the esteem of God, as these minute inconsiderables are in our esteem.

extend. And we have reason enough to suppose that many things even in our present system of nature are not determined from their eternal superior fitness; but that thousands of possibles even in our system might be equally fit in themselves, and it was the will of God, the Creator, that sovereignly chose some particulars above others, and made them actually exist, and behold they are all very good.

Proposition XVI. So when we consider God as a Governor in appointing such positive laws and rules of duty for his creatures, which are not contained in the law of nature, there may be instances wherein, among a thousand possible rules or laws, each of them may be fit, and yet there is no superior fitness in one above the rest: Then the will of God by and of itself determines and chooses what positive laws, what duties he will command or prescribe to his creatures, and he makes the thing which he prescribes more fit and good for us to practise merely by his own choice, determination, and command: As whether the tabernacle of Moses should have just such a number of boards or curtains, pins or tacks in it; whether every board or every curtain should be just so long and so broad, to the thousandth part of an inch; whether the sacrifice of the paschal lamb, the red heifer, and the whole burnt-offering on the great day of atonement, should have every the least ceremony of washings, burnings, sprinklings, &c. belonging to them, so precisely adjusted in that very form as they are appointed in the books of Moses; in short, I would ask whether every point and tittle of every ceremony and positive duty which God has appointed from the beginning of the world to this day, had in itself and in the nature of things, such a superior fitness, that it could not be determined otherwise? Surely it is much more becoming and proper for us to think and say, that God has determined these things by his own will or self-determining power and free choice: For it seems to me a very harsh and bold affirmation, that not one of all these punctilios could ever have been otherwise appointed by God himself, as we shall take notice immediately.

Proposition XVII. Thus, whether we consider man as a natural or a moral agent, and whether we consider God either as a creator or as a governor, there seem to be several instances wherein there is no superior fitness or unfitness of things, that appears to the understanding to give any direction to the will in its choice: And as the nature of the will in itself is a power of choice or self-determination, so in these instances it eminently appears that it must be left to determine and choose for itself without any direction of the understanding.

SECTION V.

THE ADVANTAGES OF THIS SCHEME OF LIBERTY.

THIS scheme of the liberty of the will, and of the spring of its choice and determination, as residing within itself, has many advantages attending it; and they are such as these:

Advantage I. We are hereby led evidently to a self-moving power, to a principle of motion or proper action in man, which we are conscious of continually, and which we feel and experience in ourselves to be the active spring of those voluntary motions which we excite in our own bodies, and thereby in the bodies that are round about us: And this leads us by fair reasoning to infer, that since we neither did nor could give being to

ourselves, to our self-moving powers, or to other creatures, there must be some such supreme self-moving power which is the Author and Creator both of bodies and spirits, that is, of all active and passive beings.

Whereas the contrary opinion, which supposes the will to be always necessarily determined by the understanding, and the understanding always determined by the appearances of things, gives us no discovery of any self-moving principle or power in this world; and while the same opinion supposes the will of God to be in the same manner universally, eternally, and unalterably moved and determined by the appearances of things in his ideas, and their superior fitness, it gives perhaps too much advantage to the atheist and the sceptic to doubt whether there be any self-moving power at all or no, whether there be any first-moving spirit, that is, a God. This doctrine has in fact been employed to this wretched purpose.

Advantage II. This opinion asserts and attributes the most proper and most rational doctrine of full freedom to every intelligent creature, and conveys a clear idea of their liberty both in those spontaneous actions where the fitness of things so fully and evidently appears, as powerfully to persuade the will, as well as in all other actions where the fitness doth not appear with such full evidence and power, or finally in those things where there is no superior fitness at all appearing. Every action determined by the will of man is free, because the will is a self-determining power.

Whereas in the other scheme, which supposes that the will of man in every action whatsoever is certainly and necessarily determined by the last dictate or judgment of the understanding, and that the understanding is necessarily determined in its judgment by present appearances of things as to their fitness or unfitness, there is really no perfect liberty of indifference or freedom of choice left to man, or to any intelligent being in any action; but all is necessary with a natural necessity, all is fate; for nothing can be otherwise than it is: And this opinion has given an unhappy occasion to the principles of the fatalists in all ages.

Advantage III. This scheme of things supposes the truth of what we daily find in common life, that there are many objects and actions which are equal or indifferent to us, and which have no appearing superior fitness or goodness in them; and yet it gives us leave to enjoy the pleasure of any of these indifferent objects or actions by the free choice and self-determining power of the will. Whereas if the will must always be determined in its choice by some superior appearing goodness or fitness, we could never come to enjoy any of the satisfactions that may arise from these equal and indifferent actions or objects, because we should be held in everlasting suspense between them, as the ass in the problem between two like and equal thistles, and never be able to taste one of them, having nothing that could determine our choice.

Advantage IV. This doctrine of the self-determining power of the will sets the nature and distinction of virtue and vice in this present state in the truest light, together with the rewardable or punishable properties thereof: This shews how acceptable to God are the good actions of men, as being the effects of free choice; the will having always a natural, free, and self-determining power of its own choice, even after things are represented to the understanding in their fitness or unfitness, in their good or evil appearances: And at the same time it lays the fault of every criminal action only upon the creature, by allowing the will to have a natural free power either to determine suddenly and

rashly, and to precipitate the judgment concerning the fitness of things, and thus betray itself into a wrong choice; and by allowing it a free power also to suspend the judgment of the understanding in opposition to any slight appearances of fitness or goodness, and to search yet further, and wait for further evidence.

This scheme also fixes the guilt of evil actions entirely on the will of the creature, by ascribing to the will a free power to determine itself, either to choose or to refuse after any representations of good or evil, fitness or unfitness, made by the understanding. This doctrine therefore sets vice and virtue in their true natures, their merit or demerit, and represents them as suited to their different rewards.

Whereas the other scheme, which determines the will always and certainly by the understanding, and determines the understanding by the situation and appearance of things, seems to take away the true nature and distinction of vice and virtue; for the sublimest virtues and the vilest of vices actually practised would rather be matters of fate and necessity, flowing naturally and necessarily from the existence, the circumstances, and present situation of persons and things: For this existence and situation necessarily makes such an appearance to the mind; from this appearance flows a necessary perception and judgment concerning these things; this judgment necessarily determines the will; and thus by this chain of necessary causes, virtue and vice would lose their nature, and become natural ideas and necessary things, instead of moral and free actions; and thus there would be nothing really rewardable in the one, or blameable and punishable in the other. This also the atheists and the fatalists have formed into so strong an argument, as it is very difficult to give a fair answer to them, if we suppose the will to be necessarily determined in every act by the ideas and assent of the understanding.

To confirm this notion of virtue and vice proceeding from the self-determining power of the will; let us consider, that all mankind naturally and constantly suppose the determinations of their wills to be their own actions, whether they be good or evil: For however they might, from a principle of pride and vanity, assume the honour of good actions to themselves, though they were not entirely their own, yet they would not impute evil actions to themselves, if they did not feel themselves to be the proper cause of them by the free determinations of their own will. The soul or conscience of man charges him with acting amiss, when his will has chosen that which is evil, and brought misery upon himself; and hence arise sharp and bitter inward reflections, and sorrows of another kind than those which proceed from mere calamities which were necessary, and which he could not avoid. Nor can we suppose the God of nature would have placed such a principle in mankind, as should naturally excite him to bitter anguish and self accusation for actions which were naturally necessary, that is, if he were determined to them necessarily by his perceptions, and in which his will had no self-determining power or choice.

Advantage V. This doctrine of the self-determining power of the will, shews us a wise and good man in his true character, *viz.* whose will, though it be a self-determining power, and can choose contrary to the understanding, and can obey the influences of appetite and sinful passion, yet it suffers itself to be directed and always determines its choice by the fitness or unfitness of things, as they are represented by the understanding after a due examination and survey, wheresoever this fitness or unfitness appears. And in this conduct he imitates the blessed God, who never acts contrary to these appear-

ances of fitness or unfitness, never determines any thing contrary to the eternal reasons and relations of things as contained in his own ideas, but always chooses and acts in conformity to them.

Advantage VI. This gives us the clearest, the easiest, and the most unexceptionable account how sin came first into the world. Man in paradise was wise and innocent, but imperfect and in a state of trial. Sense, or appetite, or passion, or all these together, joined with the devil in the serpent to make a false representation of things to his understanding, without giving him sufficient evidence to have determined his judgment on their side, and influenced his choice: Then his will, which ought to have suspended his judgment till he had made further search and inquiry, did in some heedless and unwatchful moment, rashly suffer the soul to assent to falsehood, and as rashly and hastily followed these false representations, and determined its choice to evil instead of good.

Or we may suppose, that the will being tempted and enticed strongly by appetite and passion, both by an inordinate sensual appetite to the forbidden fruit, and inordinate desire of knowledge and ambition of being as a god, determined itself rashly, without delay and inquiry, to obey and comply with the strong bias of present appetite and passion, without waiting for a mature judgment of the understanding; and thus man chose what was evil, and disobeyed his Maker: And herein man appeared highly criminal in his first sin, and the fault must be laid entirely upon himself, because it was a free act of his will, which was a self-determining power. And indeed there is no such thing as actual sin, properly speaking, but in free acts of the will.

Whereas if we suppose the understanding to be necessarily determined to judge according to the appearances of things, and the will necessarily to follow the judgment of the understanding; then the blame will be ready to be cast on the providence of God which placed Adam in such circumstances, as that such false representations should be made to his understanding which he could not avoid, and which would necessarily first determine his judgment, and consequently his choice of evil, and his disobedience to his Maker.

I will not assume so much as to pretend this is the only way whereby we can account for sin's coming into the world, and making its first entrance into the innocent heart of the first man; but I think this gives as fair and easy a solution of it, as any that I have found.

Advantage VII. This doctrine shews us the excellency and rewardableness of faith in the gospel of Christ, and the criminal nature of unbelief. When the christian revelation is proposed to man as coming from God, it becomes man as a rational creature to consider the proofs and evidences brought to confirm it, the prophecies, the miracles, the internal excellencies, and all external testimonies that come with it: And it is the will which must employ and determine the mind to dwell upon these inquiries diligently and faithfully, in proportion to the merits of the cause, to keep the heart sincere and unbiassed in the inquiry, to attend carefully to every gleam of light, and every argument, and to suffer itself to be convinced, at last, by the preponderating weight of reasoning, laying aside every prejudice of flesh and mind, of appetite and passion, of pride and self-sufficiency, of antiquity and novelty, of education and company, &c. and not to pass a judgment without such evidence as appears to be just and sufficient. This is a work of self-denial and sincerity, diligence and labour, to keep the mind in a wise suspense till arguments appear convincing, and then to yield up all its former mistakes

and prejudices to this conviction. This is truly rewardable in the sight of God. *Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed;* John xx. 29.

On the other hand, it is the will of man that hath the chief hand in infidelity: It is the will that indulges prejudices against the gospel, it refuses to apply and hold the mind close to a diligent and faithful survey of it with all its evidences; or it wisheth the gospel may not be true, because it restrains its appetites or evil inclinations; or it determines against it rashly upon slight and insufficient grounds; it indulges an aversion to it without reason, and thereby becomes culpable, and is justly punishable. *He that believeth not shall be damned;* Mark xvi. 16.

Whereas the contrary opinion, which makes faith or unbelief, assent or dissent to the gospel, and acceptance or rejection of it, to be the necessary effect of present appearances of things to the understanding, and supposes things necessarily to appear according to the circumstances and situation in which they are placed, without interesting the free-will and choice of man at all in the matter of faith or unbelief; this opinion, I say, goes a great way toward the excusing of infidelity as innocent, and taking away the virtuous character and rewardableness of faith in the gospel.

Advantage VIII. This doctrine of the self-determining power of the will, allows the blessed God a full freedom of choice in distributing his favours to which of his creatures he pleases, and in what degrees. It lays a just foundation of praise and thankfulness for all the free actions of his goodness and kindness to his creatures, according to those degrees of mercy and bounty which he distributes among them; because he is not obliged to all those particular actions or objects by a necessary and superior fitness, since he might have chosen to neglect those objects, or to manifest equal or superior goodness to other creatures, or to do it in much less degrees, or in other ways and manners, any of which might have been equally fit and proper: As for instance, God might have brought forth the soul of an American savage in the British islands, surrounded with light and knowledge; or have produced me among the savages in America, in gross darkness, as well as in Great Britain, a land of light. My soul might have been united to a body born of African idolaters: He might have made me blind and a cripple, as well as given me health and eye-sight; I might have had the brain of an idiot, and been bred up without knowledge, as well as enjoyed my share of intellectual powers and advantages of learning; he might have formed me the child of a beggar, made me an heir to filth and wretchedness, and trained me up to ask my bread from door to door, instead of the comfortable circumstances which I enjoy, and the parents from whence I came. We cannot but suppose it possible for the great God to have found a way to have made these things comport with his grand scheme and counsels in the universe, if he had so pleased; but he has chosen and determined better things for me from his own free-will and sovereign goodness, and blessed be his name.

Advantage IX. This doctrine manifests and maintains the just distinction between the moral and positive commands of God, while we suppose his moral commands and prohibitions to be drawn from the eternal fitness or unfitness of things, whereas his positive commands and prohibitions are for the most part, if not entirely, the free and arbitrary determinations of his will and choice.

I do not call them arbitrary, as though God had no reason at all for appointing them, or that they are not suited to attain very happy and divine purposes in the grand

scheme of his counsels; but they are arbitrary in this respect, that he might have chosen and appointed other positive commands or prohibitions, which might have been equally fit, and have attained purposes as happy and glorious, and which he might have introduced with equal reason: For it is very hard to suppose, as I hinted above, that every punctilio, and all the little circumstances of every positive command and prohibition of God, throughout all the ages of his church, patriarchal, jewish, and christian, were determined by the necessary superior fitness of them. I shall inquire immediately, whether any thing more than this can be said concerning his moral commands; and then what difference is there between the one and the other?

Advantage X. This scheme of the self-determining power of the will represents the doctrine of the freedom of man's will, and the power and prevalence of divine grace, in a most happy harmony and consistency, perhaps beyond what any other scheme can represent. Suppose God decree and determine to convert such a sinner as Onesimus, to faith and holiness: He can represent to his understanding, by his own word, and by the additional operation of his own Spirit, the fitness and goodness of faith in Christ, and true repentance, in such a superior light, as he who knows the hearts and sentiments, the circumstances and situations, of all men, doth certainly foreknow will be not only sufficient, but effectual to influence and persuade the will of Onesimus to comply with it: And yet, perhaps, God need not mechanically or physically, necessarily or irresistibly, move and constrain the will of the creature to comply. And though the will is left to its own free agency and self-determining power, yet the light in which God sets the gospel before the eyes of the mind, is so great, as will finally and certainly persuade the will, though not necessarily impel or constrain it. And the great God, who knows intimately the make and constitution of our natures, and our present situation, sees clearly that this light will be finally effectual to influence the will freely to comply with the proposals of grace.

Thus the virtuous and pious actions of men are praise-worthy and rewardable, and approve themselves to their own consciences as well as to God, the righteous governor and judge; because the will had a natural self-determining power to choose the contrary. And yet these good actions may be effectually secured as to their performance, by such a powerful representation of divine things to the understanding, as God foreknows will certainly, though not necessarily, be an occasion of the final free determination of the will to piety and virtue; and thus also the free favour or grace of God stands entitled to its due and divine honours.

It is the opinion of a considerable writer on this subject, that herein lies a great deal of the pleasure of a self-approving conscience, that the good man had a power to choose an evil object or action, but he actually refused it, and chose the good. And herein God, as a judge and rewarder, shews his equity, in giving happiness to the man of virtue. Whereas if the divine power physically and irresistibly move and determine the will to choose what is good, this would make the divine illumination of the mind needless, since the will might then be moved to choose virtue without it: This, say some, would do violence to nature, would quite invert the method of treating free agents; and many other evil consequences are reckoned up by some authors. Now I would only inquire whether all these are not avoided by supposing the influence of the grace of God upon the soul of man, to be only illuminative and persuasive, and yet finally efficacious and certain; which efficacy and certainty seem to be taught us

by the express and evident language of several Scriptures? Whether these Scriptures do certainly imply an immediate and physical influence of divine power on the will, to give it a new general bias and inclination over and above this efficacious illumination of the mind, I leave to be determined by divines, always supposing it to be as effectual on the will as if it were immediate, and the final event to be as certain.

If any person suggest here, that all the powers of the soul, *viz.* the will and affections, are grievously corrupted and perverted by the fall of man, and therefore there is need of an almighty physical or supernatural influence on them, as well as on the understanding, in order to give them a new bias and change them to holiness; I would also suggest in my turn, and inquire, whether such a transcendent and supernatural illumination of the understanding may not be the proper and usual divine method of renewing the will and affections, and sufficient to produce such a glorious change in them, as the Scripture describes and makes necessary to the salvation of sinners? Though the will of man be still a free agent here, yet the grace of God has all the glory in this work of conversion; inasmuch as the first work on the mind is entirely owing to grace, and without it the corrupt will would feel no such change. But I enter no further into this subject here.

SECTION VI.

OBJECTIONS ANSWERED.

THE chief objections which are raised against this scheme, are these that follow:

Objection I. It is granted in this scheme, that wheresoever there is a superior fitness of things, the will of a wise being is generally, if not universally, determined or guided in its choice by this superior fitness: But where no such superior fitness appears to the understanding, there indeed the understanding cannot represent one thing as fitter than another, nor determine the choice of the will; but then it may be said, a thousand other things may determine it, without allowing the will such a self-determining power. As in the instance given, suppose two cakes to be proposed to a hungry man, though they are both equal and alike, yet his will may be determined by some situation of one cake in point of light, and reflection of lights or colours, or by its nearness to the right-hand of the man, or some minute imperceptible motions or impressions made on the body of the man, either on his eyes, on his smell, on his brain or imagination, or some accidental turn of the nerves of his arm or hand, or something in the air or circumjacent bodies, or some attending circumstances; any of these may determine his will, or determine his hand to take one of these cakes rather than the other, without making the will such a self-determining power as this scheme supposes.

Answer I. If the will do not determine itself, then it must be determined to choose one of these cakes by suasion, or by mechanism: If by suasion, then it must be by some motive derived from a superior fitness for one of them to be chosen: But this is contrary to the original supposition that they are both equal, and that the senses or the understanding find no difference. If it be by mechanism that the man is led to choose one of the cakes, then it is a mere action of the animal or brutal part, and not the choice of the man; and thus the will does nothing, nor has no share in it, or at

most only chooses afterward what the hand hath first chosen, which is contrary to obvious experience.

If a parallel case were proposed in the world of spirits, in which there is no mechanism, such a spirit would remain for ever undetermined any way, though it were a matter of importance to the welfare of that spirit to be determined some one way; and the will of that spirit could not possibly choose what was so very necessary to its welfare, and so very easy to obtain, merely for want of superior fitness in one of the things proposed: But it is a very absurd conception, that the blessed God should so form the nature of a spirit, and make it so impotent to choose what is necessary to its welfare, and should keep it in everlasting suspense in matters of moment and importance. I might answer, in the second place,

Answer II. If all determinations of the will are effected by superior fitness, or by mere mechanism of the body, in either of these cases there is no freedom of choice, no real liberty of indifference in any human action: It is all pure natural necessity that determines the will; and in all these common instances in human life, natural liberty or freedom of choice is entirely lost, and the scheme of fatality is introduced; and how absurd that is, will appear in the following Section.

Objection II. The doctrine which has been proposed, depends in a great measure upon this supposition, that the will can determine itself without any prior reason borrowed from things, to choose one thing out of two or more, which are perfectly equal; but this seems to be impossible: For it is a plain axiom of truth, that nothing is or comes to pass without a sufficient reason why it is, or why it is in this manner rather than in another. Now, if two things are perfectly equal in all circumstances, there is no sufficient reason why one should be, or why the will of God or man should choose it; and consequently the will would never choose nor be determined one way rather than another. If a true balance has equal weights, the scales will for ever hang equal, and neither one nor the other rise or sink, because there is no sufficient reason why one should weigh down the other. Thus it is, and would be evidently with the will of man, in case two such equal objects were proposed, whereof one had no more fitness or goodness than the other: And it would be the same thing with the will of God; for if there were not one best or fittest scheme or system of worlds, he would have never chosen or determined to make any world at all; for as without a sufficient reason nothing can be, so the infinitely wise Being never determines himself to act without a sufficient reason.

Answer. Scales and balances, and all other things besides a spirit or being endowed with a will, are, properly and philosophically speaking, passive beings; and therefore they must have some other reason or cause from without, sufficient to determine them one way rather than another, before they can be determined: But spirits are beings of an active nature, the spring of action is a real something within themselves, and by which they can determine themselves. The will of God is an active and self-determining power; and the will of man perhaps in this respect is the chief image of God in this lower world, as it is an active power that can determine itself. Why must all beings and all their powers be supposed to be passive, and be determined by something extrinsical?

It is granted, indeed, that the will sometimes borrows a reason for its determination from various occasions or arguments: Sometimes from very strong motives, and the transcendently superior fitness of things; sometimes from weaker motives, where the fitness of things does but just appear superior; and sometimes itself determines its own choice between things in themselves indifferent, and where there is no superior fitness at all, or at least none that appears.

Yet let it be again observed here, as I have intimated before, that when two equal things are proposed to the will, there may be a very sufficient reason why it should determine its choice in general some way or other, though there be no sufficient reason in the things themselves for determining in this way rather than that. There is very sufficient reason why a hungry man should eat, when two equal pieces of bread lie before him; but he may choose which piece he will eat, without any other reason than because he will. So there may be very sufficient reason why God should create a world; but if you ask why he should create this sort of world rather than another, and this sort of creatures rather than others, which may be equally fit, he borrows the reason for it only from himself; his own good pleasure is a sufficient reason: He doth it because he will: Nor is any other reason necessary besides his own self-determining power. It is supremely fit he should do what he pleases. Why must the will of God be such a passive power as is not able to act of and from itself?

Objection III. This doctrine of liberty represents the will of an intelligent being as a sort of blind power determining itself without reason in many instances, acting without any motive, choosing and preferring one thing to another without any ground of choice or preference; whereas in all intelligent beings, whether God or man, there are no such blind principles of choice or action.

Answer I. It is granted, indeed, that this doctrine does not ascribe understanding, or sight and perception to the will, for that would be to confound those two distinct powers or principles in a spirit: But this doctrine keeps those two powers of understanding and will in their proper characters; the understanding sees or perceives truth and falsehood, fitness and unfitness, good and evil, as far as any such characters or qualities appear, and the will freely determines and chooses after this perception, as it pleases. Generally indeed, and according to nature, the will receives direction for its own choice or determination from the perceptions of the understanding, where superior fitness or goodness appears: In an unwise being it does not certainly and constantly so choose or determine: In a wise and good being it always chooses according to this appearing fitness. But where this superior fitness or goodness either is not, or does not appear, what can possibly remain, but that the will of the wisest being must forbear to choose, act, and determine at all, or else it must determine, choose, and act of itself and from itself.

Answer II. Let it be remembered here, what has been hinted in some of the former sections, that though the understanding and will are not improperly represented as two distinct powers of a spirit, yet they are not two distinct beings or substances: It is one and the same spirit, the same intelligent and rational being that both understands and wills, that perceives the fitness or goodness of things, and that generally acts or chooses according to this perception: And therefore this one spirit, this rational being, which has the determining power as well as the perceptive power, and which

properly determines and chooses as well as perceives, is no such blind agent as the the objection represents.

And yet it must be acknowledged, that where the fitness or unfitness, the good or evil of things does not appear to this rational being, or this spirit, where it can discover no superior fitness or goodness, there it must act by its own choice, and determine itself as it pleases, when it has no other guide or rule for self-determination: And the matter of fact in many instances is so plain as not to be denied. When two cakes lie before a hungry man, in which no manner of difference appears either in the colour, situation, quantity, or inviting qualities of them, it is indeed his hunger is the motive which really determines him to eat one of them; and it is a rational, and not a blind irrational action to take one of these cakes and eat it. The man is guided by reason, so far as reason can possibly guide him. But when reason utterly ceases to guide or direct the man, because of the equality of the two cakes, there it must be merely the self-moving power or the will of this rational being which determines which of the two cakes he shall eat, because there is no superior motive or reason to choose one rather than the other. One might say the same concerning two new guineas, or new halfpence offered to our choice.

In such a case, I plainly feel myself to determine my own choice in and of myself, and I am conscious of no superior motive, I know of nothing without me that makes me prefer one to the other: Now is it possible that I can be determined by a superior motive or moral cause, of which I have no manner of knowledge, no consciousness, no idea? Is this a motive? Is this suasion or moral causality?

In this place I cannot forbear to cite what I lately read, upon my review of these Essays, in the notes on Archbishop King's *Treatise on the Origin of Evil:* "To argue still that some minute imperceptible causes, some particular circumstances in our own bodies, or those about us, must determine even these seemingly indifferent actions, is either running into the absurdity of making us act upon motives which we do not apprehend; or saying that we act mechanically, that is, do not act at all: And in the last place, to say, that we are determined to choose any of these trifles just as we happen to fix our thoughts upon it in particular at the very instant of action, is either attributing all to the self-moving power of the mind, which is granting the question; or else referring us to the minute and imperceptible causes above-mentioned; or else obtruding upon us that idle unmeaning word *chance* instead of a physical cause, which is saying nothing at all. How hard must men be pressed under an hypothesis, when they fly to such evasive shifts as these! How much easier and better would it be to give up all such unknown and unaccountable impulses, and own that both common sense and experience dictate an independent, free, self-moving principle, the true, the obvious, the only source of action!" Page 165, edition 1st.

Objection IV. But whatsoever may be said of the blind and arbitrary determinations of the will of man, without reason and without motive, surely it is not so with the great and blessed God; all his actions are wise, and fit, and good: His will always chooses and determines according to the fitness or unfitness of things: He never does any thing in an arbitrary manner, or by mere will and pleasure; and though we are at a loss to find out the superior fitness or unfitness of many things by which the divine will is determined to choose or refuse, yet he who hath all the infinite ideas of things real and possible within the grasp of his understanding, can see those superior fitnesses or

unfitnesses which are unsearchable to us, and he always determines and acts according to them: For infinite wisdom cannot act otherwise.

Answer. To guard against the charge of supposing the great God to act in an arbitrary manner, without good reason, and without fit motives, let it be again considered what has been often hinted before, that God never decrees or acts in general without a just design and reason for it, and a proper end to be obtained by it: As for instance; if God determine to create rather than not to create, there was probably a reason for it taken from the consequences of creation which the blessed God designed, and had in his view: But when several distinct and different creatures or worlds appear in idea to his infinite understanding, in any of which there is no superior fitness, but which in themselves are equally fit, and by each of which, considered as means, he may equally obtain the same end, then he must choose one of these means, that is, one of these worlds in particular, only by the determination of his own will: And if this be called sovereign and arbitrary conduct, it is still no more than the eternal nature of things requires, and it shews him to be a proper sovereign over all his creatures, and to have a complete freedom of indifference or absolute choice in these his determinations.

Objection V. Perhaps it will be objected here, that if two things are perfectly equal, and if the will of God or man determines itself to choose one of them without a sufficient reason taken from the things to determine it, then it is determined by mere chance or accident: Now it is very hard to suppose concerning any wise being, and especially concerning the all-wise God, that in any instance of action he is determined by chance.

Answer. *Chance* is a word invented to signify the production of an effect in the corporeal world, whose cause we see not, and for which we cannot account; then we say, it came by chance, as though there was no cause of it. Chances or accidents are such events as we see not the train of causes which produce them. But in the acts of the will there is nothing can be ascribed to chance, for the will itself is the obvious cause of its own determinations.

The word *chance* always means something done without design. *Chance* and *design* stand in direct opposition to each other; and consequently chance can never be properly applied to acts of the will, which is the spring of all design, and which designs to choose whatsoever it doth choose, whether there be any superior fitness in the thing it chooses or no; and it designs to determine itself to one thing where two things perfectly equal are proposed, merely because it will.

Nor can I think of any way to refute this doctrine which I have here proposed, unless we could prove that amongst all the infinite mediums which may appear to the human or the divine mind towards the attainment of any proposed end, there are no two mediums that are equal, or which cannot be equally accommodated to their own purposes: And I think this is more than any man can prove. But this introduces the last objection.

Objection VI. If we may judge of things by the nicest observations that we can possibly make among all the beings we know or converse with, there is no such thing in nature, nor ever was, as two things proposed to the will of God or man which are perfectly equal or indifferent, or wherein every circumstance was so entirely alike, that there is no reason for the will to incline to one side rather than the other. There is no such thing as two leaves of a tree exactly alike; you may travel and search till your feet and your eyes ache, and never find them. Even in two grains of sand, or two drops of milk or water, microscopes will always shew you some difference, and therefore this

doctrine of two or more things perfectly equal is founded upon a mere imaginary supposition, and the hypothesis that is built upon it cannot stand.

Answer. What if there are no two leaves of trees, no two grains of sand, or drops of water or milk perfectly alike, because they are all compounded bodies: Yet in two bodies perfectly simple, such as two pieces of solid matter without a pore, there may be perfect equality and likeness. And surely if not in fact, yet in the divine idea of possibles there may be many parts of matter perfectly like and equal. If we are allowed to talk of two distinct parts of time, or distinct parts of space, in which the world might have been created, it must be confessed that these parts of space or time are perfectly alike, and consequently that the determination of the will of God to create the world in one of these parts of time or space rather than another, was entirely from his own will.

If one would descend to the minute specific particles of which distinct bodies are composed, we should see abundant reason to believe there are thousands of such little particles or atoms of matter, which are perfectly equal and alike, and could give no distinct determination to the will of God where to place them. Is it not acknowledged by philosophers that the different kinds of bodies are made up of corpuscles, of different shapes and different sizes; but that each particular kind is made of similar corpuscles, and nearly equal also? Thus for instance, the particles of common water have some essential difference from the particles of oil, blood, quicksilver, animal or vegetable juices, and other liquids; but they are, in a great measure, if not universally, similar among themselves: Now if we consider the immense quantity of pure water which is in this world, and the innumerable small essential particles that compose it, is there not abundant reason to suppose that millions of these particles are equal and alike, rather than to imagine that God the Creator took special care that among the innumerable millions of these aqueous particles which he made in all the rivers and oceans in the world, there should not be two of them alike and equal; and yet that all of them should be so nearly equal, and so much alike, as to distinguish them from the particles of all other bodies?

We might use the same sort of reasoning concerning the particles that compose air, light, sunbeams, concerning earth, sand, stone, and chalk, concerning grass, herbs, leaves, and trees; the hair, skin, flesh, and bones of animals, and all other specific particles of bodies, whether solid or fluid, that compose this lower world: We might ascend to the sun, the vastest of all bodies, and consider the infinite myriads of luminous or fiery particles which go to compose it, or which have been issuing from it every moment since its creation; and all these, perhaps, are vastly more in number than go to compose all the planets put together; and then inquire whether there are not two of all these particles exactly alike? This argument would run through the whole universe of the planetary worlds, with all their contents and inhabitants; and can we suppose that the Creator took such exact care as never to make two particles of any body perfectly equal and similar, and at the same time that he took care to make each of them so nearly equal and similar, as to keep all the particles of one species of bodies, in shape and size, sufficiently distinct from the particles that compose every other species? He that can suppose this, plainly appears to serve an hypothesis.

It is evident enough that the objectors' supposition, that there are no two things equal and alike, is only brought in to oppose this doctrine which I have laid down, and

that without any proof, or indeed probability: And the supposition that there are, or may be a multitude of things which are entirely alike and equal, is certainly a possible thing, and vastly the more probable of the two. If we had no proof of it, yet the various difficulties or seeming absurdities that press hard upon the contrary supposition, *viz.* "that no two things are equal, and that the will of God or man is always determined by some superior fitness of things," would incline one to renounce that hypothesis. These will be represented at large in the next Section.

Since the first edition of this book, an ingenious friend has proposed this objection, *viz.* "If God exerts his creating power, he hath some reason for it taken from the preferableness of the existence of what he creates to its non-existence; otherwise he would never create at all." To this I answer,

Answer. This is more than can be proved; for the non-existence of that creature may be as fit in itself as the existence of it; and God might have created another being equally fit in the room of it, by the mere determination of his own will.

My friend goes on, "If of two possible objects equally fit to be chosen, he gives existence to one, leaving the other in its non-existent state, the reason of his creating but one is the absence of any good reason for creating of both."

Answer. It is possible there might be equal reason for the creation of one or of both, that is, no reason at all in superior fitness: But the existence of one rather than both may be entirely owing to the will of God.

Or suppose God was determined by superior fitness to create one out of two possibles, rather than both, yet the existence or the non-existence of either of them alone may have equal fitness, though the existence of both should be supposed unfit. But how ready are we to lose and confound our thoughts in this abstract reasoning upon divine ideas and decrees, which are, indeed, too high and too hard for us; and it becomes us not to be too positive and presumptuous upon either side of such sublime and abstruse reasonings.

SECTION VII.

THE DIFFICULTIES THAT ATTEND THE CONTRARY SCHEME.

When we enter into a narrow disquisition of the eternal counsels of God, and the determinations of his will, perhaps we shall find some difficulties pressing us on all sides, which cannot be clearly and completely relieved by the understanding and reasoning powers of man, at least in this present state. I do not pretend that my set of sentiments is entirely free from all: But the chief difficulty is to find any scheme which has less or fewer than this which I have represented. Till I see that done, I think, I must be content to abide where I am. It is possible I may meet with some new objections against mine, which I had not thought of before; but while every scheme has some hardships, I persuade myself that hypothesis may still be allowed to come nearest to the truth, which has the least and fewest difficulties attending it. But when the difficulties are many more and greater which hang upon any one human scheme than do upon another, we are naturally led to suppose that such a scheme can never be true, or, at least, that it is by no means so probable as the opposite.

Let us then consider what will be the consequences of supposing that the divine will,

in all its determinations and decrees whatsoever, is universally, certainly, and unalterably influenced by the superior fitness of things.

Difficulty I. Then there is nothing amongst all the works of God's creation, or his providence, or his government of creatures through time or eternity, left free to him with a liberty of choice or indifference, since this opinion supposes there is but one single train of fittest things, or one set of things supremely fit among all the millions of supposed possibles that come within the divine survey. Has it not been always said, and that with great truth and justice, that all creatures are contingent beings, and that they might not have been? But according to this supposition no creature existing is a contingent being, for its superior fitness made its existence necessary.

And upon this hypothesis every atom in the creation, together with the shape of it, and the size and situation of it, through the whole universe, every motion in the world of corporeal nature appointed by God, together with the times and periods, minutes and moments of every event, the least as well as the greatest, except those which are introduced by inferior spirits, are all eternally necessary, because they are the fittest that could be.

And I might add, they are as unchangeably necessary as the being of God himself, that is, with a consequential, if not with a simultaneous necessity; for, at least, from the very position of his essence and existence, all conceivable things, with all their infinite relations and their eternal fitnesses arise, and they all appear to his view: And the only one scheme of things which is most fit, is necessarily determined by him into existence and actual futurity, with all the minutest parts and appendices thereof, because he sees the superior fitness of them all: Thus the least appearance and event in the corporeal world throughout all the ages of creation and providence, is unalterably necessary, if not equally necessary with God's own being.

Let us see now how such a proposition would sound, and with what aspect such a scheme of things would appear to our minds, if we enter into the detail of them. Then God could not have abstained from making this our world at all, nor from making it just such as it is, nor withheld his hand from creation one moment longer: Then he could not have made one more planet or star, or one less than he has done; nay, not so much as one atom or dust more or less in any star or planet, nor have placed them in any other form. He could not have given the sun one more beam, nor any morning since the creation one more gleam of light, or one less shade of darkness. Then the ever-blessed God could not have been happy one moment longer in solitude, or without creatures, nor begun to form any part of this universe, or this globe, earlier or later than he did; nor could he have caused one spire of grass to grow on this earth, nor one drop of water in the sea, nor one sand more or less at the bottom of it. He could not continue the material world, nor any atom of it, a moment longer in existence, nor have fixed the periods even of the minutest beings any otherwise than he has done. Not a drop of rain could fall, not a particle of water flow, nor a dusky atom of smoke ascend, in any other manner, nor at any other minute than it doth; nor could the great God have decreed it otherwise in the least punctilio, so far as mere corporeal nature is concerned therein, because each of these was supremely fit, together with the original train of causes which necessarily produced them.

But if it be allowed, that in any of these minute and inconsiderable things, God may determine freely and merely by his own will, without superior fitness, why may he not

determine ten thousand other things, which seem to us of greater importance, merely by his own will without superior fitness?

But on the contrary, if God cannot do any thing without the view of superior fitness, this difficulty will extend to the affairs of human nature also, and to the works of providence, redemption, and grace, as well as to the inanimate world and God's creating influences. The Americans and the Hottentots could not have been formed otherwise than under such special disadvantages; nor could Great Britain have had the gospel withheld from it one moment longer. Nor, indeed, according to this scheme, could God have withheld his Son from being sent to redeem the world, nor withheld his Spirit with all its gifts and influences from the inhabitants of this globe, nor have omitted any one miracle towards the propagation of this gospel; for the will of God was absolutely determined to do all this by its superior fitness.

What strange doctrine is this, contrary to all our ideas of the dominion of God! Does it not destroy the glory of his liberty of choice, and take away from the Creator and Governor and Benefactor of the world, that most free and sovereign agent, all the glory of this sort of freedom? Does it not seem to make him a kind of intelligent instrument of eternal necessity, an almost mechanical medium of fate, and introduce Mr. Hobbs's doctrine of fatality and necessity into all things that God hath to do with? Doth it not seem to represent God as a being of vast understanding and consciousness, as well as of power and efficiency, but still to leave him without a will to choose among all the objects within his view? In short, it seems to make the blessed God a sort of almighty minister of fate under its universal and supreme influence. Thus speaks the heathen stoic in a tragedy:

> "Quæ nexa suis currunt causis
> Non licet ipsum vertisse Jovem." Seneca.
>
> "Thus causes run, a long connected train;
> Not Jove himself can break th' eternal chain."

And it was the professed sentiment of some of the ancients, that "fate was above the gods."

Is it not abundantly better to suppose that among the infinite variety of possibles in the survey of the great God, there might be many schemes of grand design, and many mediums of accomplishment, both in the larger and minuter parts of them, which might be equally fit and proper? And that God, by his own will, determined which scheme he would choose, and which medium he would make use of to bring it to pass? And that he made, or rendered, this particular scheme, and these mediums become, if I may so express it, more fit and good, that is, pleasing and agreeable by his own choosing them? So a man, when he has once chosen for himself one thing out of many which he proposed to himself, and all which before appeared to him to be equally good, makes that which he has chosen particularly more agreeable and good to himself by his choice of it, and for ever after prefers it because his own will has actually chosen it: He delights in his own free choice.

Objection. Perhaps it may be replied here, that even according to the scheme that I have proposed, all those things are allowed to be eternally and unchangeably necessary in which God beholds a superior fitness; and these, perhaps, are far more in

number than those which have no such superior fitness, or which, in themselves, are equal and indifferent: And then it will follow, that even in this scheme of mine, fatality is introduced into far the greatest parts of the works of God.* For if there be the least degree of inequality in any two or more objects, the divine wisdom beholds it, and finds out the superior fitness, and is determined thereby: And then probably there are but few things left, which have such a perfect equality in them, as to be the objects of free choice: All the rest is mere fate.

Answer. But to this I answer, That if we suppose no more than two different sorts of worlds to have had equal fitness in the divine view, before he chose to create one of them, together with the creatures and the inhabitants in them, then it follows that every creature, and every circumstance of every creature, in this one universe or world, which God has actually chosen and created, were all matters of indifference, and consequently were the object of his free choice: For though every creature in this universe, or the world which is now made, should be allowed to have a superior fitness with regard to the place it holds in this present universe, which is very improbable, and more than can be proved; yet I think we must own that every individual part or creature of this world, together with this world itself, once stood in the view of God as a matter of mere indifference, and an object of free choice, since another sort of world might have been created, with all its different parts, creatures, or inhabitants.

We might proceed further, and say the same concerning every single planet, and the creatures or inhabitants in it, and perhaps concerning every large spot of land, every mountain, every island, every sea and river in any of these planets, that they might have been altered as to some atoms or drops that compose them, though the other parts of that planetary world had been the same: And this reasonable supposition provides objects enough for the divine choice, and the freedom of the will of God to exert itself.

We might also descend to much minuter parts of the creation, to every tree, and leaf, and flower, to every plant and animal, to every feather and hair of fowl and beast, as well as to the inanimate parts of any of these globes: There does not seem to be an absolute necessity that every minute part, and pore, and fibre of every species, and of every individual, should be precisely what they now are, even though the chief part of the form of each of them were the same as it is: And this will still provide new objects for the choice of God, and his perfect liberty. Thus his actions of free choice in our world will be vastly more numerous than those to which he is any way determined by a superior fitness.

Nay, every act of God and his determination of any or every circumstance relating to every creature in the present universe, will be an act of his free choice or liberty of

* Another objection is raised here: If there be any one thing to which God is influenced by superior fitness, this is fatality: And if such a fatality be allowed in one thing, why may it not in all? Or if one or a few such instances in God's works do not infer fatality, why should many or all infer it?

Answer I. As we do not charge the doctrine of fatality on men upon a supposition of some of the volitions or actions of men to be determined necessarily, since the rest and greatest part are free, so neither can fatality be charged on God, since the chief and largest part of his actions *ad extra* are free also, as will appear further in what follows.

Answer II. Whatsoever ideas or propositions, whatsoever eternal truths, or rules of virtue may be necessary in the divine mind, yet there is not so much as the real existence of one creature necessary, and so fatality is utterly excluded; since all created beings are contingent till the will of God determine them into existence. See Difficulty I. preceding. See also the answer to the objection in this very page.

indifference, if we allow, as I said before, but two general schemes of a creable universe to have been equally fit: Even though every particular part of each universe were supposed to be necessary to its own whole, and therefore supremely fit in that particular universe, if language will allow such an expression. This doctrine therefore is so far from fatality in every part of it, that it makes every creature or existent being in the present natural world, the object of God's free choice.

Difficulty II. According to this supposed scheme, that is, if one single thing be the only fittest, and if God be determined necessarily to this one thing, then the free grace and goodness of God, and the special thankfulness of man for his benefits seem to be much diminished, and in some measure precluded: For in this view of things, God could not bestow one grain of favour more or less upon any creature than he hath done; nor could he have chosen any other object for the exercise of his mercy and goodness, either among the varieties of the animal or intellectual creatures than what he has chosen. And would not this take away a great part of my obligation to thankfulness for any of his benefits, and in some measure cancel my obligations to thank him for his choice of me to be the object of them, if I must believe that God could not have withheld these benefits from me, nor could have chosen any other object for these blessings which he has made me partaker of, nor given me a grain less of any good thing which I enjoy relating to this life or another?

It is true, you will say, God has done me as much good as he could do, and therefore I am under the highest obligations to him: But let it be remembered also, if I may dare to express the consequence of this opinion, that he has made me as unhappy as he could make me, according to this scheme and see whether this does not diminish or vacate a great part of this obligation.

Will not this destroy, or at least vastly abate the reasons of gratitude and love to God in those who receive his favours, when kings and slaves, rich men and beggars, strong men and cripples, creatures whose life is filled with pain and poverty, or whose whole period of life is affluence and ease, were distinguished only and necessarily by the superior fitness of their circumstances? What is there of free mercy in his disposal of benefits? What can we find of mercy in the decree or providence of God, which distinguishes the happy from the miserable? What is it that raises them above the others, but that God was necessarily determined to divide these distinct portions to them all by the superior fitness of things? And have not Abraham the friend of God, David the king, Paul the apostle, Sir Isaac Newton the philosopher, Judas the traitor, Irus the cripple, Davus the slave, and Jack Adams the idiot, all equal reason of thankfulness to the free bounty of their Maker, since so far as he acted in their composition of mind or body, or in their original circumstances of life, he determined each in such a particular manner, because his own will was thus necessarily determined, and therefore he could not have done otherwise?

Difficulty III. If there be but one such superior fitness among all the ends and means which are in the comprehensive survey of God, and if God be under an unalterable necessity of determining according to this superior fitness, thence it will follow that every thing possible is necessary, and every thing that is not necessary is impossible.

There is scarce any real difference between things necessary, and things possible, even in the view of God himself, according to this scheme of all things being determined

by supreme fitness. The difference is chiefly in our apprehension, by reason of our short-sighted views of things, who cannot discover this superior fitness. But in reality, and in the sight of God, according to this hypothesis, nothing is possible to be done by God himself but what hath this superior fitness, and that is always necessary, and must be done.

And according to this opinion also, what is not necessary is really impossible, and can never come into existence, because it has not this superior fitness. In this way of thinking, there neither is, nor ever was a medium between the necessity of what is future, and the impossibility of that which is not future, since there is but one fittest means or end, and that is necessarily future; but what is not fittest is for ever impossible, and always was so. Now does not this appear strange and incredible doctrine?

I know it will be objected here, that this way of talking confounds metaphysical necessity with moral necessity, which are very distinct things. A metaphysical necessity, say some, is a necessity arising from the essence or nature of things, and takes place only where the opposite implies a contradiction; so all the semidiameters of a circle are necessarily equal, because it is inconsistent in the nature of things they should be unequal. But a moral necessity is that whereby a most wise being is necessarily led to choose that which is best, or to act that which is fittest. Now in this view there is a wide difference, say they, between things necessary and possible, that is, things that are metaphysically possible and which are morally necessary. A thing is said to be metaphysically possible wherein there is no inconsistence in the nature of things, and such are ten thousand essences which yet shall never exist: And this is very different from a thing which is morally necessary, that is, which an all-wise being wills and chooses out of ten thousand supposed possibles, because of its superior fitness, even though divine wisdom cannot choose otherwise. But to this I answer,

Answer. That in philosophical strictness and the truth of things, this moral necessity and impossibility, and this metaphysical necessity and impossibility will appear to be very near akin: And though there may be some difference between these two necessaries, *viz.* moral and metaphysical, as to the immediate and proxime cause and reason of their necessity, yet the necessity of both of them is a physical or natural necessity, they are both equally strong and unalterable, and the original cause and reason why both of them are necessary lies in the very nature of things. I might say the same also concerning their impossibility: As for example, If the being A cannot possibly exist because it carries in it some ideas or properties which are naturally inconsistent, so neither can B possibly exist, because it doth not carry in it a superior fitness; since, according to this hypothesis, it is inconsistent with the nature of the all-wise God to make B exist, because it was not supremely fit; and it is inconsistent in the nature of things that B should ever come into existence, because it wanted one property necessary to the possibility of its existing, and that is, supreme fitness: Thus from the very nature of God, and from the nature of things, it is impossible that B should ever exist. And how much does this differ from a natural or physical impossibility?

Hence it appears, according to this hypothesis, that it was true from eternity that every thing was naturally impossible, which had not in its nature this superior fitness; and if it had in its nature this superior fitness, then it was not only possible, but had a

sort of natural necessity to exist, which was the thing I undertook to prove, and which is the difficulty under which this opinion still seems to labour, notwithstanding the offered distinction.

Difficulty IV. Another difficulty that seems to bear hard upon this hypothesis, of all things being determined by superior fitness, is this, *viz.* Then there would be scarce any real difference between the moral and the positive laws of God. The one would be every whit as necessary as the other, both in themselves as laws, and with regard to God the lawgiver: For if all the positive commands and institutions of God are given because he saw an antecedent fitness and goodness in them superior to any other commands that could be given at that time, and in those circumstances; and if all his moral commands are given upon the same reason; will it not follow that the positive laws are as necessary for that time and those circumstances, as the moral laws are in all times and circumstances? I say, allowing this difference, that the moral commands are necessary at all times and occasions, and the positive only on some particular occasions. And upon this hypothesis, it is no more in the power of God to have altered the positive commands on those particular occasions, than it is in his power to change the moral commands on any occasion whatsoever. Then every pin and tack in the tabernacle of Moses, every little punctilio and circumstance in all the Levitical rites of purification and sacrifice, every colour and thread which is of divine appointment in the curtains of the tabernacle, or the vestments of the priest, were as necessary at that time and place as the ten commands, or any rule of virtue and piety whatsoever; since they did necessitate and determine the will of God to appoint them by his seeing a superior fitness and goodness in them all.

It is true, indeed, we who are short-sighted creatures, and cannot penetrate so far into the fitness and unfitness of things, cannot find out the positive commands of God by our reasoning, as we can many of the greater and more obvious moral laws: Yet let it be observed also, that these moral laws in some of the lesser branches of them, and in their application to particular cases, perhaps can hardly be found out by our short and feeble reasonings; and in this respect the difference between moral and positive laws would grow less and less, even with regard to us, till in many instances the difference would vanish. But with regard to God himself, and in the nature of things, they would be both equally necessary, and God could not appoint any of them otherwise than he has done.

Difficulty V. Then there would be no such thing as any liberty of choice and indifference in the world, or at least only among imperfect intelligent beings, who are endowed with wills, and that but seldom too: And this very liberty would arise merely from their imperfection, that is, because in some things they could not find the superior fitness, since they cannot extend their knowledge deep and wide enough to see all the fitnesses and unfitnesses of things. For according to this scheme, all the decrees and actions of God the most perfect Spirit, about himself, or about his creatures, would be ever necessary; and all the material creation, the whole universe of bodies, and every natural motion therein, so far as ordained by God even in their remotest causes, would be necessary from the beginning to the end of all things: And a very wise man who sees the fitnesses of things, would have scarce any thing of this freedom, for he would be always necessarily determined in his choice by this superior fitness.

But let us think a little further on this point: If this opinion were true in the whole

scheme, and all spirits, perfect or imperfect, were necessarily determined to act according as things appeared fit or unfit to the mind, and if these appearances were the necessary result of the situation of man or other intelligent creatures, whether wise or unwise, among a variety of objects; then, I think, there would be no freedom of choice, no liberty of indifference at all, no proper self-determining power, either in heaven or earth, either in God, angels, or men, but all would be one huge scheme of fatality both in the intellectual and material world.

Shall it be replied here, What! Is there no liberty of indifference to be found any where but where the objects are entirely equal? Have I not liberty of choice, when I choose one house to dwell in, or prefer one piece of cloth to wear rather than another, because I find one better and fitter for my use than another? Does not all the world call this a liberty of choice, and proper freedom of the will, notwithstanding the superior qualifications or motives that inclined me to choose this and refuse that?

I answer, and allow this to be a proper freedom or liberty of choice, supposing the will only to be directed and inclined by these motives, and not powerfully and necessarily determined by them. But if once we assert the will to be necessarily determined by these motives, then it has no proper self-determining power in these instances, and the very idea of proper liberty vanishes and is lost. And indeed what great difference will there be between matter and spirit, if both are determined to move or act only by external influences? Both would be unactive or incapable of self-activity; but one would have a consciousness of its actions which the other has not.

Is it not much better therefore to suppose, that the influence of motives in the understanding reaches no further than to direct the will, without a certain or necessary determination of it, wheresoever there are motives arising from superior fitness? And may we not reasonably conceive both in this universe, as well as in the world of possibles, that there are millions of objects wherein this superior fitness either is not, or does not appear; and here is still a larger space for the exercise of perfect freedom of choice, and wherein the will is determined by nothing but itself.

Difficulty VI. It may be considered as another difficulty and hardship which would attend this opinion, that there are a great number of Scriptures which would have a most absurd sound, if they were to be interpreted upon this foot, *viz.* the necessary determination of the will of God in every thing by the antecedent and superior fitness of things. There is no act of providence or grace which the Scripture represents as a free favour of the blessed God, but would be hereby made necessary, and God would be limited to that one object and that one action. Let us consider a few particulars:

Deut. iv. 37, Moses saith to the Israelites, *Because he loved thy fathers,* (Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob,) *therefore he chose their seed after them:* But in truth, according to this doctrine, he loved them because they were the fittest for his love, and God could not do otherwise; and he chose them and their seed, because he could make no other choice. Deut. xxi. 5, *The priests the sons of Levi, the Lord thy God hath chosen to minister unto him;* that is, because he saw such a superior fitness in the sons of Levi, that he could not choose any other tribe. 1 *Sam.* x. 24, God chose Saul to make him a king; but he was determined to it by the superior fitness of this choice. Psalm cxxxii. 13, *The Lord hath chosen Sion, he hath desired it for his habitation;* that is, because he saw

it so fit, that he could not choose any other dwelling in that age. 1 Cor. i. 27, 28, *God hath chosen the foolish things of the world, and the weak things, and things which are despised:* It is true, he gives a reason for it, *viz.* that he might *confound the wise, &c.;* but then it is plain, he could not have chosen the wise, the mighty, and the honourable. 2 Thess. ii. 13, *God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation;* that is, because it was so supremely fit, that he could not pass you by without choosing you.

How frequent is the expression in Scripture of God's choosing this or that person or thing, this or that family or nation, for particular purposes in his providence and grace? And it is represented still as a matter of free favour: But according to this interpretation, there is no true liberty of choice or free mercy in all these things, since there was such a superior fitness on that side, that it was not possible for God to have determined or chose otherwise.

But let us proceed to some other texts. Ephes. ii. 4, *God who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us,—hath quickened us together with Christ:* But according to this opinion, he could not possibly have loved the Ephesians less than he did, nor let them go on in their death of trespasses and sins without quickening grace. 1 Tim. i. 13, 14, *I was before a blasphemer and a persecutor,* saith St. Paul; *but I obtained mercy—and the grace of God was exceeding abundant:* But this opinion would interpret the words, that "God could not withhold mercy from me, and therefore I obtained it: *And the grace of God was exceeding abundant* to me, because it was not possible it should have been less." Rom. ix. 23, 24, *That he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy—not of the Jews only, but also of the gentiles:* But this opinion obscures these riches of glorious grace, by shewing that God could choose no other vessels of mercy but the Jews of old time, and the gentiles afterward, and in that proportion in which he chose them. Rom. x. 20, *Isaiah grows very bold and saith, I was found of them that sought me not;* that is, God was necessarily determined by the superior and antecedent fitness of things to be found of those who never sought him.

And if we read the whole ninth chapter to the Romans, we find God is there represented as making a distinction of mercy between Isaac and Ishmael, between Jacob and Esau, between the Jews and gentiles, first in favour of the Jews, and afterwards rejecting the Jews, and receiving the gentiles: Let these texts be construed in what sense you please with regard to persons, or families, or nations, or with regard to temporal, spiritual, or eternal blessings, still all are represented by the apostle as instances of God's sovereign goodness and special mercy, in the free choice of some, and the neglecting of others. But according to this opinion, there is no such thing as liberty of choice or indifference with God in any of these actions; for he could have acted no otherwise than he did in any one punctilio of grace or providence: His will was necessarily determined as to all his benefits of every kind, and to the persons who were objects of them, by antecedent superior fitness, so that he could not have bestowed nor withheld these blessings in any other manner than he has withheld or bestowed them.

I grant always, and have always granted, that wheresoever there is such an antecedent superior fitness of things, God acts according to it, so as never to contradict it; and particularly in all his judicial proceedings as a governor and distributer of rewards and punishments, he has a constant regard to vice and virtue, to superior fitness and

unfitness, though he may reward or rather bestow beyond our merit, or he may punish less. And even in acts of mere bounty and free goodness, we must always grant and suppose him never to act what is not fit. Yet we may also suppose, when we consider God as a benefactor, that in his infinite survey of things, there may be a thousand equally fit objects for this goodness, and a thousand equal ways of manifesting it. Now this reasonable supposition leaves him a very large field for the exercise of his sovereign goodness and pleasure, and the free determinations of his will and choice, both as to the blessings which he bestows, and the persons or nations on whom he bestows them.

Let us take one further step, and shew that even the grace of God in sending his own Son to redeem us, is much obscured by this opinion of the constant determination of the will of God by some superior fitness: John iii. 16, *God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life;* that is, according to this opinion, *God so* greatly *loved the world* of mankind because he saw it antecedently most fit for his love, and therefore could not love it less; and *he gave his only begotten Son,* because he saw it so supremely fit, that he could not withhold him; and he made this covenant of grace and proposal of salvation, *that whosoever believeth in him should not perish,* because this proposal was so supremely fit also, that it was not possible for him to make any other covenant or any other proposal of salvation. Verse 17, *God sent not his Son to condemn the world,* that is, because he saw it unfit that he should do so, and therefore he could not have sent his Son on this dreadful errand. Rom. v. 8, *God commendeth his love towards us, in that while we were—sinners, Christ died for us;* but according to this doctrine he was so necessarily determined to give this particular instance of love to sinners, and to save them in this manner, that he could not have refused to give his Son to die for them. What contrary turns would this sort of philosophy give to this most divine instance of free and rich mercy in all the Bible?

Give me leave at the end of this catalogue of Scriptures, to cite two or three which represent to us, in a more express manner, that the will of God often determines itself with such a supposition of superior fitnesses, that he may display his own godhead, and the independence of his actions. *Rom.* ix. 15, cited from Exod. xxxiii. 19, *I will make all my goodness to pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee: And I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and I will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy.* Now, as the name of the Lord is, *I am what I am,* or *I will be what I will be;* Exod. iii. 14; so his correspondent character in matters of pure grace and bounty is, *I will do what I will do;* that is, the will of God in matters of mere bounty is a self-governing principle, and is determined only by itself in his most free and sovereign instances of grace and blessing; he hath no other determination but what arises from within himself, even the good pleasure of his own will.

How often is this thought repeated in the word of God! How frequently is this given as the only reason of his conduct, in his works of creation, and in his distributions of blessings in the kingdom of providence and the kingdom of grace! Matt. xi. 26, *Even so, Father, because it pleased thee.* Rev. iv. 11, *Thou hast created all things, O Lord, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.* Isaiah xlvi. 9, 10, *I am God, and none else—I will do all my pleasure.* Matt. xx. 14, 15, *Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? I will give unto this last even as unto thee.* Rom. ix. 18, *He hath*

mercy on whom he will. The blessed God, considered as a creator and as a benefactor, worketh all things according to the counsel of his own will; in a thousand instances his own will is his counsellor: He acts *according to the good pleasure of his will, which he hath purposed within himself;* Ephes. i. 5, 9, 11.

And here let me conclude with the words of St. Paul, *Rom.* xi. 33, 36, who, when he had been tracing out the methods of the conduct of God towards the Jews and gentiles, leaves the springs and reasons of them all entirely within himself, and adores the great incomprehensible; *How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! Of him, and by him, and for him, are all things; to whom be glory for ever and ever.* Amen.

THE

CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE

OF THE

TRINITY:

OR,

FATHER, SON, AND SPIRIT, THREE PERSONS AND ONE GOD,

ASSERTED AND PROVED,

WITH THEIR DIVINE RIGHTS AND HONOURS

VINDICATED,

BY PLAIN EVIDENCE OF SCRIPTURE, WITHOUT THE AID OR INCUMBRANCE OF HUMAN SCHEMES.

WRITTEN CHIEFLY FOR THE USE OF PRIVATE CHRISTIANS.

THE

PREFACE.

THE late controversies about the important Doctrine of the Trinity, have engaged multitudes of Christians in a fresh study of that subject; and amongst the rest I thought it my duty to review my opinions and my faith.

In my younger years, when I endeavoured to form my judgment on that article, the socinians were the chief or only popular opponents. Upon an honest search of the Scripture, and a comparison of their notions with it, I wondered how it was possible for any person to believe the Bible to be the word of God, and yet to believe that Jesus Christ was a mere man. So perverse and preposterous did their sense of the Scripture appear, that I was amazed how men, who pretended to reason above their neighbours, could wrench and strain their understandings, and subdue their assent to such interpretations. And I am of the same mind still.

But while I was then establishing my sentiments of the Deity, of the Son and Spirit, by the plain expressions of Scripture, and the assistance of learned writers, I was led easily into the scholastic forms of explication; this being the current language of several centuries. And thus unawares I mingled those opinions of the schools with the more plain and scriptural doctrine, and thought them all necessary to my faith, as thousands had done before me.

When I lately resumed this study, I found that the refiners of the arian heresy had introduced a much more plausible scheme than that of Socinus. While I read some of these writers, I was so much divested of prejudice, and so sincerely willing to find any new light, which might render this sublime doctrine more intelligible, that some persons would have charged me with lukewarmness and indifference. But I think my heart was upright in these inquiries. And as the result of my search, I must say that I am a steadfast and sincere believer of the godhead of Christ still. For though these authors give a rational and successful turn to some places of Scripture, which I thought once did contain a substantial argument for that truth, yet there was never any thing that I could find in these new writings, that gave me a satisfying answer to that old, that general and extensive argument for the Deity of the Son and Spirit, which I have proposed in its clearest light in the Eighth Proposition. The expressions of Scripture on that head were so numerous, so evident, so firm, and strong, that I could not with any justice and reason enter into the sentiments of this new scheme. But after a due survey of it, I was fully convinced, that the professors of it, who denied the Son and Spirit to have true and eternal godhead belonging to them, were so far departed from the christian faith.

I render hearty thanks to God, who hath so guarded the freedom of my thoughts, as

to keep them religiously submissive to plain revelation; and has made these later inquiries a means to establish my faith in this blessed article: That the Father, Son, and Spirit, are three* Persons and one God, and to confirm it by juster and brighter evidences than I was possessed of before.

But while I was engaged in this study, I found that the scholastic explication of this sacred doctrine was not in all the parts of it so evidently revealed, and so firmly grounded upon Scripture as the plain doctrine itself. Thus while my faith grew bolder in this sacred article, my assurance as to the modes of explication sensibly abated. Though none of the arian arguments could prevail against my belief of the true and eternal godhead subsisting in three persons, yet my thoughts were often embarrassed about the coeternal and coequal sonship of Christ and procession of the Holy Spirit, about the communication of the same infinite individual essence, or the conveyance of the same unoriginated and self-existent nature to two other distinct persons in the godhead. I began to think that we had been too bold in our determinations of the *modus* of this mystery; we had entered too far, and been too positive in describing the eternal and consubstantial generation of the Son, and spiration of the Holy Ghost in the same numerical essence; and that we had made a particular detail of these incomprehensibles too necessary a part of our creed.

And especially when I came to reflect, that there had been some other modes of explaining this sacred article proposed to the world, and some of them patronized by men of distinguished learning and unblemished piety, I found that these learned scholastic forms and terms of explication were by no means necessary to support the scriptural doctrine: I took notice also how much occasion the unskilful management of these artificial hypotheses had given to the cavils of heretical wits, to blaspheme the doctrine itself.

I then considered with myself, how useful it might be to private Christians to have the plain naked doctrine of Scripture concerning the Trinity fairly drawn out, and set before their eyes, with all its divine vouchers: How much more easily they would embrace this article when they see the whole of it so expressly revealed: And though they might confess they knew not the way to explain it, yet perhaps they might be more firmly established in the truth, and better guarded against temptations to heresy than if it were surrounded and incorporated with hard words and learned explications, which could not be proved with such express evidence from the word of God, which are confessed to be as inconceivable as the doctrine itself, and which had often ministered to strife and controversy.

I imagined also, that it would be an acceptable service to the church of Christ, if this sublime and important doctrine were brought down to a practical use, and our particular duties to the sacred Three were distinctly declared and vindicated out of the holy Scriptures; which is of far greater moment to our piety and salvation than any nice adjustment of all the mysterious circumstances that relate to this article in the theory of it.

I knew of no treatise on this subject written in this manner, and therefore I attempted it. Now the reader will find these four things following designed and kept in view throughout this discourse, *viz.*

* Let it be ever remembered, that both in the title, the preface, and throughout the whole treatise, I take the word *person* to signify no more than a sufficient distinction, between the sacred Three, to sustain the distinct characters and offices assigned to them in Scripture.

I. To declare and confirm this blessed doctrine of the Trinity, by plain and express testimonies of Scripture. As far as I was capable, I would make this truth appear to the world with as much evidence as it has appeared to me, that the same true godhead belongs to Father, Son, and Spirit, and yet that they are three such distinct agents or principles of action, as may reasonably be called persons.

II. To describe, according to the revelation of Scripture, what are the same divine honours and duties that may be paid to the sacred Three, considered as one in godhead; and what are the distinct personal duties and honours that we are required to pay to each divine person, considered in their distinct characters and offices.

III. To shew that all the necessary truths that relate to this doctrine may be believed, and all the necessary duties that flow from it may be performed, without inquiring into any particular schemes to explain this great mystery of godliness, or to determine the manner, "how one God subsists in three persons." To this end I have taken care to avoid every argument, and every expression that would confine our thoughts to any one scheme of explication, or necessarily lead us into any one hypothesis. For since the Doctrine of the Trinity is so important in itself, and so necessary to true Christianity, I would not willingly bring in any thing as a necessary part of this doctrine, but what might be acknowledged and professed by all who believe that the Son and Spirit are the true God, though they may fall into very various and different sentiments about the way of explaining it.

And, in the last place, I have attempted to do all this in such plain and easy language, that every private Christian who reads this doctrine may understand it, so far as is necessary, may be established in the scriptural proofs of it, and may have his faith secured in this day of temptation. Upon this account I have been watchful against admitting those Latin and Greek words and terms of art, which have too often tended to flatter the vanity of men, and make them learned in mere words and syllables, and which have often proved an incumbrance and burthen to their faith, rather than a support of it.

Having these views and designs always in my eye, the judicious reader will not wonder that I have omitted some forms of argument, and some texts of Scripture which have been often called into this service. Some of these, perhaps, would have led me to speak of some particular scheme of explication which was contrary to my great design: Others did not strike me with the same satisfactory evidence, as some of my fathers or brethren have found from them. And though I will not rob them of their arguments, yet I beg leave to produce none but my own. And yet I may be bold to profess, that I believe this sacred doctrine as firmly as those who think they can prove it by a multitude of Scriptures which I have omitted: And I hope this may be a sufficient apology for any such omissions.

It is a most uncharitable and unrighteous thing, while a man is professing and proving any article of faith in most express language, and by convincing demonstrations, that he should be suspected of heresy, merely because he chooses to leave out some public phrases, or happens to drop some popular argument in that controversy, or excuses some doubtful text of Scripture from that service: And yet this hath been too often the shameful practice and the just reproach of many Christians, in whom the fury of an ignorant zeal has prevailed above the heavenly graces of light and love.

At the same time I will take the freedom to declare, that when a man excepts against one argument for any sacred truth as feeble, and treats another with jest and raillery; when he tells you this text is not authentic, and the other has quite a different sense; when he cavils at this term because it is not precisely and expressly written in Scripture, and will express the same truth in no terms at all, nor mention any one argument that is sufficient to prove it; I think that man gives too just a suspicion that he is no great friend to that doctrine; and if he should tell me I have no reason to deny his orthodoxy, yet, I am sure, at best, there is reason enough to doubt of his prudence. But to proceed to my design:

The method which I have chosen is what the learned called *analytic*. Beginning with the first and plainest principle of natural religion, and then, supposing the revelation of Scripture, I have attempted to lead my reader onward to the most easy and yet most satisfying evidence of this glorious mystery of the gospel. Nor did I think it necessary to stand still often to observe and answer every objection. For these many times break in upon the order of a discourse, and divert the mind from the train of argument; and as Doctor Knight well observes, in the preface to his late Sermons on this subject, "Objecting is endless; the pursuit of which wearies the mind, draws it too far from the main argument, and is apt to leave it in confusion and obscurity. Honest hearts and common understandings, whose concern is greater to discern truth than to know the multiform windings of error, being once convinced of the goodness of the proofs that infer a doctrine, will be satisfied therewith, though they be not qualified to return an answer to every objector: For they well know that objections must fall, where the proofs of a doctrine are clear and conclusive."

I confess, my thoughts sometimes ran out too far in a defence of some occasional positions, or incidental truths: But, upon a review, I have cut them all off from the body of this discourse, lest the thread of it should be too much interrupted, and have reserved them to be published in distinct essays or dissertations, if it be found needful.

After all our labours and studies, it is the good Spirit of God alone, who can lead us into all truth. If he please, he can bless this little treatise, which is the fruit of retirement, labour, and prayer, and make it useful to instruct the ignorant, to settle the wavering, to guard those that are tempted, and to recover those that have gone astray. To this end I entreat my readers, that since it is but a little book, they would begin and read it through, that they may see all the parts of it in their proper connection: Then I presume they will not take offence at any single sentence, which, if separated from the rest of the work, might, perhaps, have given surprise or disgust to the weaker Christians.

I conclude with an ardent address to heaven, that the sacred mysteries of our religion, and particularly this doctrine, which contains in it, and carries with it the substance and glory of the gospel, may prevail over all the clouds and powers of error. O may it never more be profaned by angry disputes and fruitless janglings! But be humbly received and piously improved, in order to pay all necessary honours and duties to the sacred Three, which is the great design for which this doctrine was revealed: And thereby we shall effectually secure and evidence our own interest in the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of the Father, and the communion of the Holy Spirit. *Amen.*

THE

CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY.

INTRODUCTION.

THERE were many thousands of souls brought to the saving knowledge of God, and trained up for heaven by the various revelations which God gave to mankind before our Lord Jesus Christ came into the world. His own counsels and contrivances wrought powerfully for the salvation both of the patriarchs and the Jews under those darker dispensations, without their particular and explicit knowledge of those divine methods whereby that very salvation was to be effected. These were reserved as a mystery hidden from ages and generations, to be revealed by the gospel in these later times. Therefore the gospel is called the *revelation of the mystery which was kept secret since the world began, but now is made manifest by* a clear interpretation of *the Scriptures of the prophets,* and *made known to all nations for the obedience of faith;* Rom. xvi. 25, 26; that is, that the nations might shew their obedience to a revealing God, by believing this doctrine now it is clearly revealed, and the prophets are explained.

It is the gospel that teaches us how God the Father sent his own Son to assume human nature, and therein to fulfil all righteousness, and to make full satisfaction for our sins by his sufferings and death, in order to restore us to the favour of God. It is the gospel that tells us how our Lord Jesus Christ ascended to heaven, and receiving from the Father the promise of the Spirit, sends him down to renew our natures to holiness, and to restore us to the image of God. And it is the gospel that calls us to believe or trust in this Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, in order to be restored to the favour of God by his death and righteousness, and to be renewed after the divine image, by the operations of his Holy Spirit.

Thus we are taught by the gospel, what hand the Son and Spirit have in our salvation, as well as the Father. The Father appears here as our sovereign and offended Governor, condescending to be reconciled, and appointing this method for our recovery; the Son of God appears as a Redeemer or Reconciler; and the Spirit of God as a Sanctifier; and we are taught to get an actual interest in these blessings by faith.

Upon this account, when we are admitted into the profession of the Christian faith, the names of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, are joined together in the very ceremony of admission. We are baptized with this form of words, according to the institution of Christ, Matt. xxviii. 19, *Go—teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.*

Thus, though the ancient Jews and patriarchs might be saved without an explicit

knowledge of the special methods of this salvation, and the divine persons concerned in it, because they were not clearly revealed; yet since these are clearly revealed to us by Christ and his apostles in the New Testament, and appointed to be a part both of our faith and our profession, it is evident that some knowledge of these divine persons, the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, and their several sacred offices, or an acquaintance with the Doctrine of the blessed Trinity, is now become a necessary part of our religion: So that I know not how any man can properly be called a Christian without it.

It is certain, indeed, and must be confessed, that this sacred Doctrine of the Trinity has some great and unsearchable difficulties which attend the full explication of it, such as the wisest men in all ages have found too hard and too high for their comprehension; and yet it is as certain, that so much of this doctrine as is necessary to salvation, is plainly revealed in Scripture, and easy to be understood; that the unlearned, and persons of the meanest capacity, may attain the knowledge of it: For the *high-way* to heaven, which was to be revealed under the gospel, must be marked out with such plainness and evidence, that the *way-faring men, though fools, shall not err therein;* Isaiah xxxv. 8.

It shall be my business therefore, at present, to lead the unlearned Christian, by soft and easy steps, into this mystery, so far as may furnish him with a sufficient knowledge of it for his own salvation, and shew him how to confirm and maintain his belief of it by the plain evidence of Scripture, and to secure him from making shipwreck of his faith in a day of temptation. And I shall attempt to do all this without perplexing and embarrassing his mind with any of those various mazes of scheme and hypothesis, which men of learning have invented to explain and defend this sacred article of the christian faith.

The way wherein I shall pursue this design, is, by laying down the following propositions:

Proposition I. There is a God.

Proposition II. This God is the Creator of all things, the first and the eternal Being, the greatest, the wisest, and the best of beings, the sovereign Lord and disposer of all his works, the righteous governor of his intellectual creatures, and the proper object of their worship.

Proposition III. There is, and there can be, but one true God, but one such God as agrees with the foregoing description.

Proposition IV. Since there can be but one God, the peculiar, divine, and distinguishing characters of godhead cannot belong to any other being.

Proposition V. And God himself is so jealous of his own honour, and so concerned to maintain the dignity of his godhead, as never to suffer these peculiar distinguishing characters to be ascribed to any other besides himself.

Proposition VI. He is also so kind and faithful to his creatures, as to tell them what are these peculiar and distinguishing characters of godhead, that they may not run into this mistake and guilt of ascribing them to any other.

Proposition VII. The peculiar and distinguishing characters of godhead are those names, titles, attributes, works, and worship, which God has assumed to himself in his word, exclusive of any other being; and has either asserted them expressly to belong only to himself, or left it sufficiently evident in his word that they belong to him alone.

Proposition VIII. Yet these very names, titles, attributes, works, and worship, which are peculiar to God, and incommunicable to another, are ascribed to three, by God himself, in his word; which three are distinguised by the names of Father, Son, and Spirit.

Proposition IX. There are also some other circumstantial but convincing evidences, that the Son and the Spirit have the true and proper godhead ascribed to them as well as the Father.

Proposition X. Thence it necessarily follows, that these three *viz.* the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, have such an intimate and real communion in that one godhead, as is sufficient to justify the ascription of those peculiar and distinguishing divine characters to them.

Proposition XI. Since there is, and can be, but one true God, these three, who have such a communion in godhead, may properly be called the one God, or, the only true God.

Proposition XII. Though the Father, Son, and Spirit are but one God, yet there are such distinct properties, actions, characters, and circumstances ascribed to these three, as are usually ascribed to three distinct persons among men.

Proposition XIII. Therefore it has been the custom of the christian church, in almost all ages, to use the word *person*, in order to describe these three distinctions of Father, Son, and Spirit, and to call them three distinct persons.

Proposition XIV. Though the sacred Three are evidently and plainly discovered in Scripture to be one and the same God, and three distinct personal agents or persons; yet the Scripture hath not in plain and evident language explained, and precisely determined, the particular way and manner, " how these three persons are one God," or " how this one godhead is in three persons."

Proposition XV. Thence I infer, that it can never be necessary to salvation to know the precise way and manner, how one godhead subsists in these three personal agents, or, " how these three persons are one God."

Proposition XVI. Yet we ought to believe the general doctrine of the trinity, *viz.* that these three personal agents, Father, Son, and Spirit, have some real communion in one godhead, though we cannot find out the precise way and manner of explaining it.

Proposition XVII. And wheresoever we meet with any thing in Scripture that is incommunicably divine, ascribed to either of these three persons, we may venture to take it in the plain and obvious sense of the words, since we believe the true and eternal godhead to belong to them all.

Proposition XVIII. Where any thing inferior to the dignity of godhead is really and properly attributed in Scripture to the person of the Son or the Holy Spirit, it may be easily imputed to some inferior nature united to the godhead in that person, or to some inferior character or office sustained by that person.

Proposition XIX. Nor do these inferior nature or natures, characters or agencies, at all hinder our firm belief of the godhead of these three persons, which is so plainly expressed in Scripture; nor should it abate or diminish our sacred regards to them.

Proposition XX. We are bound, therefore, to pay divine honours to each of the sacred Three, *viz.* the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, according to their distinct characters and offices assigned them in Scripture.

Proposition XXI. In so doing, we shall effectually secure our own salvation: For the Scripture has made our salvation to depend on those offices which these divine persons sustain, and the honours due to them according to those offices, rather than upon any deep philosophical notions of their essence and personalities, any nice and exact acquaintance with their mysterious union and distinction.

Proposition XXII. The man, therefore, who professes each of the sacred Three to have sufficient divine power and capacity to sustain the characters, and fulfil the offices attributed to them in Scripture, and pays due honour to them according to those offices, may justly be owned by me, and received as a christian brother, though we may differ much in our notions and opinions about the explication of the blessed Trinity, or though we may both be ignorant or doubtful of the true way of explaining it.

Now if these propositions are found agreeable to the mind and will of God in his word, then may his blessed Spirit furnish me with clearness of thought, with force of argument, and happiness of expression, to explain and prove them, so far as to enlighten the understanding, and satisfy the conscience of humble and sincere Christians in this great and glorious doctrine of the Trinity; that they may pay their distinct honours to the sacred Three, in this world of darkness and imperfection, and walk on rejoicing in their way to the world of perfect life and happiness. *Amen.*

PROPOSITION I.

THERE IS A GOD.

IT must be known by the light of nature, that there is a God, before we can reasonably have any thing to do with Scripture, or believe his word. Now the shortest and plainest way to come at the knowledge of God by the light of nature, is by considering the whole frame of this visible world, and the various parts of it. Hereby we shall not only find that there is a God, but we shall learn in a great measure what is his nature also.

A man cannot open his eyes, but he sees many objects round about him which did not make themselves: The birds, the beasts and the fishes, the herbs and the trees, the fire and the water, all seem to confess that they were not their own creators, for they cannot preserve themselves. Nor did we give being to ourselves or to them, because we can neither preserve ourselves nor them in being.

Besides there is an infinite variety of instances in the constant regular motions of the planets, the influences of the sun and moon, in the wonderous composition of plants and animals, and in their several properties and operations, as well as in the very structure of our own bodies, and the faculties of our minds; which sufficiently discover there must be some superior and divine power and wisdom, which both contrived and created their natures and ours, and gave being both to them and us.

Thus it appears that the first notion we have of God, by the light of nature, is the Creator of all things. Thence it follows, that he must be before all those things which he has made; therefore he must be the first of beings.

And it is plain, that he could have no beginning, and that there was no time when God was not; for then he could never have begun to be; since there was nothing

that could create him, nor can there be any reason why he should of himself start out of nothing into being at any moment, if he had not been before: So that since we have proved that there is a God, we may be sure that he ever was, or that he was from all eternity.

Now the same argument which proves that he had no beginning, will infer also, that he can have no end: For as nothing could give him being, nothing can take it away. He depends not on any thing for leave to exist, since nothing in nature could possibly concur or contribute any thing toward his existence. Nor does his being depend on any arbitrary act of his own will, for he did not create himself. Nor can he himself wish, or will, or desire not to be, because he is perfectly wise, and knows it is best for him for ever to exist; and, therefore, he must exist, or be for ever.

And this is what the learned call a necessary being; that is, one who ever was, and ever must be; without beginning and without end. And this, in many of their writings, is justly made to be the great and eminent distinction between God and the creature, *viz.* that the creatures might be, or not be, as God pleases; but God always was, and always will be: He must necessarily have a being from everlasting to everlasting.

As his works discover his existence, or his being; so the greatness of his works shews the greatness of his power. He that made all things out of mere nothing, must be almighty: He that has contrived all things with such exquisite art, must be allwise and allknowing; and he that has furnished this lower world with such innumerable rich varieties of light and food, of colours, sounds, smells, and tastes, and materials for all the conveniencies of life, to support and to entertain our natures, he must be a Being of unspeakable goodness.

It appears yet with fuller evidence, that God is the chiefest, the greatest, the wisest, and the best of beings, when we consider more particularly, that all the power, knowledge, wisdom, and goodness, all the virtues and excellencies, and the very natures of all other beings are derived from God, and given to the creatures by God their creator; and therefore he must, in some glorious and eminent manner, possess all perfections and excellencies himself; for nothing can give to another that which itself has not.

Thus *the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy-work*, as the holy Psalmist assures us, *Psalm* xix. 1. And thus *the invisible things of God from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and godhead;* Rom. i. 20.

The light of reason, or nature, further teaches us, that such an almighty Being, who by his own power and wisdom has created all things out of nothing, must needs be the sovereign Lord, the absolute possessor and proprietor of all his creatures, they must be all at his disposal, and under his government. And as for the intelligent parts of his creation, such as men and angels, it is the very law of their natures, that they ought to love, worship, and obey him that made them, to pray to him for what they want, and to praise him for what they receive, and thence he becomes the proper object of worship.

Reason itself assures us, that he who hath shewn such exquisite wisdom, even in the formation of his inanimate creatures, and in his disposal and management of them agreeably to those purposes for which they are fitted, will manifest also the same wisdom in governing his intelligent creatures, and bestow those rewards or punishments on them

for which they are fitted, agreeably to their tempers, characters, and actions. And this is properly called the righteousness or equity of God, or his governing justice.

I have been much the longer in this proof of the being of God, in order to introduce the next proposition which expresses his nature, and contains the common and general sense of the word *God*.

PROPOSITION II.

GOD IS THE CREATOR OF ALL THINGS, THE FIRST AND THE ETERNAL BEING, THE GREATEST, THE WISEST, AND THE BEST OF BEINGS, THE SOVEREIGN LORD AND DISPOSER OF ALL HIS WORKS, THE RIGHTEOUS GOVERNOR OF HIS INTELLECTUAL CREATURES, AND THE PROPER OBJECT OF THEIR WORSHIP.

THIS description of God is drawn with apparent evidence from the very proof of his being. The same light of nature or reason which tells us that there is a God, does at the same time tell us what God is: And this being the plainest and the most obvious and easy way of coming to the knowledge of his existence, these must be the first, the plainest, and the easiest notions of godhead or divine nature, that mankind naturally obtains and receives.

But since the knowledge of God, by the light of reason, is so low, and feeble, and obscure in the greatest part of mankind, he has condescended to reveal both his being and his nature in his written word. This hath been attested with so many divine signs and miracles, as prove it beyond all controversy to be the word of the living God: And in this word of his, he hath described his nature in the same manner as the light of reason would describe it; though in greater perfection, and with fuller assurance.

When, therefore, we use the word *God* properly, absolutely, and without any special limitations, some of these ideas will naturally come into the mind, and especially those of almighty, allwise, the Creator, and the Eternal. Therefore this has been the common sense of the word in heathen nations, even from all antiquity, and amongst all the thinking part of mankind, who have acknowledged one God only; and this is the general sense of the word *God* in the Scripture, as might be made to appear by many quotations if it were needful.

Hence it will follow, that those persons who make the word *God* to signify mere authority, dominion, or government, do much diminish the idea of it; they contract and narrow the sense of it in opposition to the common usage of the word in all languages, ages, and nations, wherein the unity of God has been professed; they divert it from the common meaning of it in the lips of Jews, heathens, and Christians: And they would do well to consider, whether this is not done merely to serve some particular schemes of their own, and to support some hypothesis or opinion of theirs, which otherwise could never be obtained.

I confess, the word *God* is used sometimes in the Bible, both in a figurative and in a limited or imperfect sense.

1. It is used in a figurative or improper sense, to signify some character among creatures that hath a likeness or resemblance to any part of this description of God. So Moses the prophet is called *a god to Pharaoh*, Exod. vii. 1, because he carried divine authority with him, in his message to Pharaoh, and wrought divine works before him, which were

representations of God's government and his power. So angels are called gods, *Psalm* xcvii. 7, and in many other places, for the same reason. So prophets, judges, and magistrates are called gods, *Psalm* lxxxii. 1, *He judgeth among the gods;* verse 6, *I said, Ye are gods.* John x. 35, *He called them gods to whom the word of God came;* because they spoke and acted under divine influence, or in the name and authority of God.

2. This word *God* is used also in many Scriptures in a limited or imperfect sense, to signify the object of worship, which is one part of the description of the true God. So Isaiah xliv. 15, *Yea, he maketh a god, and worshippeth it.* Isaiah xxxvi. 18, *Hath any of the gods of the nations delivered his land?* Verse 19, *Where are the gods of Hamath and Arpad?* that is, their idols whom they worshipped. Micah iv. 5, *The people will walk every one in the name of his god;* that is, that being, either real or imaginary, whom they worshipped. And probably, in this sense, the devil is called *the god of this world,* 2 Cor. iv. 4, because he was worshipped by the heathens under various names, as well as because he seems to have great power in this sinful world, by the permission of God.

But after all, there is, and there must be, such a distinction between the word *God,* when it is applied peculiarly to the true God, the Creator, and when it is applied to creatures, or to idols, as that the creature may not be mistaken for the Creator; nor an idol for the living and the true God.

Wheresoever, therefore, the word *God* is used in Scripture, and it does not evidently appear to be used in any of these figurative, diminutive, and imperfect senses, we are naturally and reasonably led to understand it concerning the allwise and almighty Creator and Governor of all things, the greatest, the wisest, and the best of Beings.

PROPOSITION III.

THERE IS, AND THERE CAN BE, BUT ONE TRUE GOD, BUT ONE SUCH GOD AS AGREES WITH THE FOREGOING DESCRIPTION.

THE unity or oneness of the godhead is a great truth, derived from the light of nature, as well as from Scripture.

The light of nature tells us, that there can be but one, who is the first, the wisest, and the best of Beings; there can be but one Almighty: And many of the ancient sages, in the heathen world, have found out this truth by their own reason, and maintained it with force of argument.

If I were to talk like a philosopher upon this head, I would prove that there could be but one God, because the very nature of God implies in it full perfection and complete all-sufficiency; so that he can stand in need of nothing, because he has a sufficiency in himself for all conceivable purposes and ends. If there were therefore any other god, that other god would be a needless one, or an unnecessary being, which would destroy the very nature and notion of godhead; for God is a necessary being, or a being of absolute necessity, as we have proved before, and he cannot but exist.

But as my design is to assist the understanding of the meanest Christians, I will rather have recourse to the plain words of Scripture: And there are many places in the word of God where he asserts his own unity: Deut. vi. 4, *Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord.* Exod. xx. 3, *Thou shalt have no other gods before Me.* Isaiah xliii. 10, *Before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me.* Isaiah xliv. 8, *Is*

there a God besides Me? Yea, there is no God, I know not any. Isaiah xlv. 5, *I am the Lord, and there is none else; there is no God besides Me.*

The Jews of old were so ready to be led away to the idolatry of their neighbour nations, and to worship more gods than one, that the blessed God thought it proper in his word to give them frequent repetitions of this great truth, to guard them against the danger of acknowledging any gods besides himself: And it being a great part of the design of the gospel, to reform the heathen world from polytheism, or the worship of many gods, Christ and his apostles have taken care in the New Testament to inculcate this divine truth again in express language: *Mark* xii. 29, the words of Moses are cited by our Lord Jesus, as the foundation of all religion. The first of all the commandments is, *Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord:* Mark x. 18, *There is none good but one, that is God.* By which he means, there is none has such original, and eternal, and all-sufficient goodness, as he. Gal. iii. 20, *God is one.* Ephes. iv. 6, *One God and Father of all, who is above all.* 1 Cor. viii. 4, 5, 6, *An idol is nothing in the world, and there is none other God but one; for though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,) but to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things.*

We must, therefore, take care in searching out and expressing the doctrine of the trinity, that we do not make two or three distinct gods, lest we break in upon the foundation of all religion, whether natural, jewish, or christian.

PROPOSITION IV.

SINCE THERE CAN BE BUT ONE GOD, THE PECULIAR, DIVINE, AND DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERS OF GODHEAD CANNOT BELONG TO ANY OTHER BEING.

THIS proposition is so evident, that I have no need to spend time in proving, that the essential and distinguishing marks and qualities of any one being can never belong to another: For otherwise there could be no certain distinction between any two different beings in nature; and we should run into perpetual mistakes hourly, and take one for the other. If the distinguishing characters of fire could belong to earth or water, or the peculiar marks of human nature could be found in plants or brute animals, this would bring everlasting confusion into the affairs of life, and common language. Much more necessary is it that there should be the most evident marks of distinction between God and a creature, lest we should bring the same confusion into all our religion and worship, by mistaking the creature for God, and God for the creature.

PROPOSITION V.

GOD HIMSELF IS SO JEALOUS OF HIS OWN HONOUR, AND SO CONCERNED TO MAINTAIN THE DIGNITY OF HIS GODHEAD, AS NEVER TO SUFFER THESE PECULIAR DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERS OF GODHEAD TO BE ASCRIBED TO ANY OTHER BESIDES HIMSELF.

IT is fit that godhead should support its own dignity, and bear its character high above all creatures; otherwise God could not be just and true to himself. It is necessary

that the almighty Maker and sovereign Governor of all, should maintain his state and majesty, and suffer nothing which is not God, to approach too near the grandeur of godhead; nor will he bear it without high resentment and divine indignation.

This is what is properly called his *jealousy* in Scripture. He is often described as *a jealous God*, and will not suffer creatures to share with him in his incommunicable glories. Exod. xx. 3, 4, 5, *Thou shalt have no other gods before Me. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; thou shalt not bow down thyself to them nor serve them; for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God.* Deut. iv. 23, 24, *Take heed to yourselves lest—you make you a graven image, or the likeness of any thing which the Lord thy God hath forbidden thee; for the Lord thy God is a consuming fire, even a jealous God.* Deut. vi. 13, 14, 15, *Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and serve him, and shalt swear by his name: Ye shall not go after other gods, of the gods of the people which are round about you, (for the Lord thy God is a jealous God among you) lest the anger of the Lord thy God be kindled against thee, and destroy thee from off the face of the earth.* To the same purpose speaks Joshua, chapter xxiv. verse 19. Deut. xxxii. 16, 17, *They provoked him to jealousy with strange gods, with abominations provoked they him to anger; they sacrificed unto devils, not to God; to gods whom they knew not, to new gods that came newly up, whom your fathers feared not.* Verses 19, 20, 21, *When the Lord saw it, he abhorred them, because of the provoking of his sons and his daughters: And he said, I will hide my face from them;—they have moved me to jealousy with that which is not God; they have provoked me to anger with their vanities.* Such are the awful manifestations of God, in a way of jealousy for his own name and the dignity of his godhead.

The heart of God is so much set upon it to exclude all rivals or competitors from any share in the prerogatives of godhead, that he borrows one of his names from his jealousy in this matter; Exod. xxxiv. 14, *Thou shalt worship no other God; for the Lord whose name is* JEALOUS, *is a jealous God.*

He declares solemnly that his honour should not be given to another; nor will he bear that any thing should come near him, or be likened to him in the glory of his nature: Isaiah xlii. 8, *I am the Lord, that is my name; and my glory will I not give to another.* Isaiah xlvi. 9, *I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me.* Isaiah xl. 18, *To whom will ye liken God, or what likeness will ye compare unto him?* Verse 25, *To whom will ye liken me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One.* And when he threatens his vengeance against the worship of that which is not God, he speaks in the fire and fury of his jealousy, as it is often expressed in the language of the prophets.

PROPOSITION VI.

GOD IS ALSO SO KIND AND FAITHFUL TO HIS CREATURES, AS TO TELL THEM WHAT ARE THESE PECULIAR AND DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERS OF GODHEAD, THAT THEY MAY NOT RUN INTO THIS MISTAKE AND GUILT OF ASCRIBING THEM TO ANY OTHER.

THOUGH men of learning and retirement among the heathens, who have devoted themselves to the study of philosophy, have found out several of these peculiar characters of godhead; and the light of reason, if well improved, is sufficient to teach

all men so much of God as to leave them *without excuse*, Rom. i. 19, 20; yet in our fallen and degenerate state we are so thoughtless and foolish, and our understanding is so feeble, so rash, and giddy, that we are ready to commit mistakes in this solemn and important point. Therefore the blessed God in great condescension has told us in his word, what are the peculiar glories that belong to his nature, and the characters by which he will be known and distinguished from all that is not God.

And since he has separated a people to himself, and promised to give them the knowledge of himself, in order to his glory and their own happiness, he has been so kind to them .and so faithful to his covenant, as to mark out those distinguishing characters of godhead, by which he will be known, in a very evident manner; and that not in a single text or two, but in many places of Holy Scripture, that they may not thoughtlessly run into this heinous mistake of ascribing godhead to any inferior natures, and incur the dreadful penalties which his jealousy has threatened.

PROPOSITION VII.

THE PECULIAR AND DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERS OF GODHEAD ARE THOSE NAMES, TITLES, ATTRIBUTES, WORKS, AND WORSHIP, WHICH GOD HAS ASSUMED TO HIMSELF IN HIS WORD, EXCLUSIVE OF ANY OTHER BEING; AND HAS EITHER ASSERTED THEM EXPRESSLY TO BELONG ONLY TO HIMSELF, OR LEFT IT SUFFICIENTLY EVIDENT IN HIS WORD THAT THEY BELONG TO HIM ALONE.

HERE I shall not insist on all the peculiar characters of godhead that may be found in Scripture, but mention only a few, *viz.* such as in my opinion seem to carry the clearest evidence with them.

The peculiar divine names are chiefly these two, *viz.* the name JEHOVAH, and the name GOD, with some additional word of honour, as the *true God*, the *great God*, the *mighty God*, the *only wise God*, *God and none else*, and *God blessed for ever*.

The peculiar divine titles are, *the God of Abraham*, *the Lord of hosts*, *King of kings and Lord of lords*, *the first and the last*.

The peculiar divine attributes are, *omniscience*, *omnipresence* and *omnipotence*, *eternity* and *immutability*.

The peculiar divine works are, the *creation* and *conservation of all things*, the *changing of the heart*, and *raising the dead*.

The last peculiar character of godhead is, *divine worship*.

And, I think, the words of Scripture where these characters of godhead are mentioned, will be most easily compared together, and set in the fairest light, if I refer them all to be cited under this next proposition.

PROPOSITION VIII.

YET THESE VERY NAMES, TITLES, ATTRIBUTES, WORKS, AND WORSHIP, WHICH ARE PECULIAR TO GOD, AND INCOMMUNICABLE TO ANOTHER, ARE ASCRIBED TO THREE BY GOD HIMSELF IN HIS WORD; WHICH THREE ARE DISTINGUISHED BY THE NAMES FATHER, SON, AND HOLY SPIRIT.

ONE can hardly read a leaf of Scripture, especially of the New Testament, but we

find some mention made of these three glorious agents, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost: And though these words are not to be understood precisely in the same sense as when applied to men, yet the meaning of these words must answer the common use of them in some main respect; else surely such words would not have been used.

And if we consult the general sense of them in Scripture, we shall find that this word *Father* signifies some superior character, from whom the Son derives at least his character of Sonship, and upon whom he depends so far as he is a Son, by whom he is sent on glorious errands.

The Son, who is also sometimes called the *only begotten of the Father*, must have some very extraordinary relation to the Father more than any other being, and is often employed by the Father.

The Holy Spirit has this title eminently given him as a being of a spiritual nature, as a prime agent in the affairs of the Father and Son, even as the spirit of a man knows and manages the affairs of a man; and he is called *Holy*, because his great work is to sanctify and to make holy the children of men.

But of these things I shall speak more hereafter. My work is here to prove, that all three have the peculiar characters of godhead.

That the incommunicable divine names, &c. are ascribed to God the Father, the first in the sacred Trinity, is universally agreed by all Christians of all parties, there is therefore no need to spend time in proving it.

My present business, therefore, shall be to shew under each of these five heads, *viz.* Names, Titles, Attributes, Works, and Worship, what are the peculiar characters of godhead; and prove, first, That they are ascribed to Christ, the Son of God; and then, That several of them are ascribed also to the Holy Spirit.

Before we enter on this argument, it may be proper to observe, that all parties allow that the Second Person in the Trinity, or our Lord Jesus Christ, is sometimes called *the angel* or *messenger* of his Father; sometimes his *servant*, his *wisdom, the brightness of his glory, the express image of his person, the life, the light, &c.* But the chief names he is called by are, υἱὸς, *huios*, "the Son," or ὁ λόγος, *logos*, "the reason or word of God." I mention this only to shew, that where we meet with him in Scripture under these various names, we may know it is the same person. Nor need I take pains to prove this here, since I design to mention and make use of no place of Scripture where any of these appellations can be controverted, without a particular vindication of them in this sense.

I proceed now to the argument proposed:

I. "The names of God ascribed to Christ."

1. Jehovah is a name peculiar to God; which we may infer from the very composition of the word, according to the opinion of the best hebrew critics: For it signifies *being* itself, "he who was, and who is, and who shall be;" and therein seems to denote the eternity and the unchangeableness of God, whose name is *I am that I am*, Exod. iii. 14; and answers to the description of God, Rev. iv. 8, *The Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.*

But there are most express Scriptures which prove the name Jehovah to be incommunicable: Psalm lxxxiii. 18, *Thou, whose name alone is Jehovah, art the most high*

over all the earth; Isaiah xlv. 5, *I am* Jehovah, *and there is none else, there is no God besides me;* Isaiah xlii. 8, *I am* Jehovah, *that is my name, and my glory will I not give to another.*

Here let it be noted, for the benefit of unlearned Christians, that where the word *Lord* is written in great letters in the Old Testament [LORD] the word in the hebrew is *Jehovah;* where it is written in small letters [Lord] it is some other word in the hebrew, as *Adon* or *Adonai,* &c. except perhaps one or two places where the printer hath made a mistake.

Now this name *Jehovah* is ascribed to our Lord Jesus Christ, or the Son of God: *Jer.* xxiii. 6, the *righteous Branch* that was to be raised unto David, was the promised Messiah or Christ: And *this is the name whereby he shall be called, The* LORD *our righteousness.* It is evident that this name is not ascribed to Christ as the name *Jehovah-nissi* [the Lord is my banner] is given to an altar, *Exod.* xvii. 15; or *Jehovah-shalom,* Judges vi. 24, [the Lord is peace]; or as the name *Jehovah-shammah* [the Lord is there] is given to a city, *Ezek.* xlviii. 35. Because it is possible in all those places that God the Father may be signified. But Christ must be the person meant in these words, whether they be translated *Jehovah our righteousness,* or *Jehovah is our righteousness;* for it is a promise concerning the times of the New Testament, where Christ is often described as our righteousness, but God the Father is never described so: 1 Cor. i. 30, *Christ Jesus—is made unto us wisdom and righteousness.*

There are other places in the Old Testament where the name *Jehovah* is given to Christ upon this very account; Isaiah xlv. 24, 25, *Surely shall one say, In* Jehovah *have I righteousness and strength: In* Jehovah *shall all the seed of Israel be justified:* Which in the New Testament are thus interpreted, Rom. v. 18, *By the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men to justification of life.* 2 Cor. v. 21, *Christ who knew no sin, was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.*

Christ is called *Jehovah,* Isaiah vi. 1, 9, 10, *I saw the* LORD [Jehovah] *sitting upon a throne,—and he said, Go and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not: Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes, lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert and be healed.* Compared with John xii. 40, 41, *He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart, that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them. These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory and spake of* HIM. It is manifest enough to any whose preconceived opinions do not turn them aside from the obvious sense of Scripture, that our Lord Jesus Christ is the person here meant.

So Zech. xi. 12, 13, *They weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver: And the* LORD [Jehovah] *said unto me, Cast it unto the potter, a goodly price that I was prized at of them!* Compared with Matt. xxvii. 9, *Then was fulfilled that which was spoken—They took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was valued.* The prophet here tells us, it was the Lord Jehovah that was thus valued; and that was Christ, as St. Matthew applies it.

That the name *Jehovah* is applied also to Christ in other places, I shall take frequent notice.

2. The name *God,* with some additional honour, is another name whereby God is distinguished from creatures, as, *the true God, the great and mighty God, the only wise*

God, the only God, or *God and none else,* and *God blessed for ever.* For though upon some special account the word *God* is sometimes applied to a creature, yet it is without any honourable addition or epithet joined to it.

1. *The true God,* is a distinguishing name, John xvii. 3, *This is life eternal, to know thee the only true God.* Now Christ is so called, 1 John v. 20, 21, *And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding that we may know him that is true; and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life. Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen.* It is very unlikely that the apostle John should conclude his Epistle with such a solemn charge against idolatry, or the worshipping that which is not God, and yet in the foregoing verse leave his expression concerning the true God, so easily and so naturally to be interpreted concerning Christ Jesus, if he were not the true God.

It is farther evident, that he who is called the *eternal life* in this verse, is the true God, and it is as evident, that Christ is called *the life,* and the *eternal life,* in the same Epistle; 1 John i. 2, *For the life was manifested, and we have seen it and shew unto you that eternal life,* [that is, the Son of God] *which was with the Father and was manifested unto us.*

2. *The great and mighty God,* is a distinguishing name. Deut. x. 17, *The* LORD *your God is a great God, a mighty and a terrible.* Jer. xxxii. 18, 19, *The great, the mighty God, the* LORD *of hosts is his name, great in counsel, and mighty in works;* which appellations are given to Christ, Titus ii. 13, *Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearance of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;* or, as it may be properly translated, "our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ." Isaiah ix. 6, *To us a Child is born, to us a Son is given—his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God.*

3. *The only wise God,* is a distinguishing name. 1 Tim. i. 17, *To the king eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.* Rom. xvi. 27, *To God only wise be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen.* Which character is applied to Christ himself, Jude 24, 25, *Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy; to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.* Now that this doxology is ascribed to Christ, it appears not only from this, that he is called our Saviour, which is Christ's special title; but it is he who shall present the church without fault to himself, or before the presence of his own glory. See Ephes. v. 25, 27, *Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it,—that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle,—and without blemish.*

4. *The only God,* or *God and none else,* is another distinguishing name. Deut. iv. 35, 39, *The* LORD *he is God, and there is none else beside him.* Isaiah xlv. 5, *I am the* LORD, *and there is none else; there is no God beside me.* Now whosoever will read the latter end of the 45th chapter of Isaiah, from verse 15 to verse 25, will find several expressions of the same kind: *I am the Lord—there is no God else beside me—I am God, and there is none else;* and yet they are applied to this Person, who is eminently called *the Saviour,* verses 15, 21; "in whom Israel shall be saved with an everlasting salvation," *verse* 17; to whom "all the ends of the earth are to look that they may be

saved," *verse* 22; in whom we "have righteousness and strength," *verse* 24; in whom the "seed of Israel shall be justified and shall glory," *verse* 25; and to whom "every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall swear," *verse* 23. All which characters belong to our Lord Jesus Christ in the common language of the New Testament, and this 23d verse is particularly cited and applied to him, Rom. xiv. 10, 11, *We shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ: For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.* And whosoever will read that chapter from the 6th to the 12th verse, will find the words *Lord, God,* and *Christ,* used very promiscuously for one another.

5. *God blessed for ever,* is also a distinguishing name. 2 Cor. xi. 31, *The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is blessed for evermore.* Rom. i. 25, They *worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.* Yet this name is given to Christ, Rom. ix. 5, *Christ—who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.*

Here it is proper to be noted, that when the word *God* is applied to creatures in Scripture, there is generally some degrading circumstance, or some diminishing expression added in the same place, to exclude them from any interest or share in the true godhead. But when it is ascribed to Jesus Christ, there are characters of additional honour often joined to it, to shew that he is the true God. So if Satan be called god, it is but *the god of this world;* 2 Cor. iv. 4. If Moses be called god, it is a god that was made, a god only to Pharaoh, and a god whose brother was a man; Exodus vii. 1, *I have made thee a god to Pharaoh, and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet.* If magistrates are called gods, they are mortal gods; Psalm lxxxii. 6, *I have said, Ye are gods, but ye shall die like men.* If angels are called gods, they are such gods as worship a superior God; Psalm xcvii. 7, *Worship him, all ye gods.* But our Lord Jesus is called *the true God—the great* and *the mighty God—the only wise God—God, and there is none besides him—God, blessed for evermore;* as we have shewn already; and that *God, whom other gods,* or angels, *worship,* as we shall shew hereafter.

II. The titles of God ascribed to Christ.

1. *The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.* This was the glorious name whereby God described himself when he sent Moses to fetch Israel out of the land of bondage, Exodus iii. 6, 15, *I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, &c.—And God said to Moses, Thus shalt thou say to the children of Israel, The Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me to you. This is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations.*

And yet the person who speaks this, is called *the angel of the* LORD, verse 2, *And the angel of the* LORD *appeared unto him in a flame of fire, out of the midst of a bush;* and it is plain, that he who sat or dwelt in the bush was God himself; *Exodus* iii. 16, and 4, 5. This is "the Lord God of the fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob, who appeared to Moses in the bush;" all this is confirmed in the New Testament, *Acts* vii. 30, where this history is repeated. And when Moses would bless the tribe of Joseph with a divine blessing and the favour of God, he calls it the *good will of him that dwelt in the bush;* Deut. xxxiii. 16.

Here I shall take occasion to enlarge a little on these appearances of Christ to the patriarchs.

Christ Jesus is that God who called to Abraham, and bid him offer up his son, *Gen.* xxii. 1, &c. for he is called *the angel of the Lord*, verse 11, when he *called unto him out of heaven, and said—Now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thy only son from* ME, that is, from that God who commanded him to be offered up. This was the *angel of the covenant*, and yet *the God of Abraham.* "The angel which redeemed Jacob from all evil, is the God before whom his fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk, and the God which fed him all his life long; *Gen.* xlviii. 15, 16.

And it is universally agreed by the ancient and modern writers, that this *angel* was the same who appeared to Abraham, when "the *Word of the* LORD came to him in a vision," *Gen.* xv. 1, 2. This was *the* LORD who appeared to him, Gen. xvii. 1, *and said, I am the almighty God.* This is one of those *three men* who appeared to Abraham, *Gen.* xviii. 1, 2, who is called *Jehovah*, verse 13, 14, &c. This was *the man* who wrestled with Jacob, *Gen.* xxxii. 24, who is called *God*, verses 28, 30; who is styled *the angel of God, the angel of the* LORD, and *the* LORD [or Jehovah] promiscuously, in his appearance to Gideon, *Judges* vi. 12, 14, 16, 20, 21, 22, 23; the "captain of the Lord's host," appearing to Joshua, who is called *the* LORD [or Jehovah] *Joshua* v. 14, 15, compared with vi. 2; who is also "the angel of God's presence," *Isaiah* lxiii. 9; *the* angel or *messenger of the covenant*, Malachi iii. 1; and "the angel in whom is the name of God," *Exod.* xxiii. 20, 21, or in whom godhead dwells; that is, the Messiah, or our Lord Jesus Christ, who appeared often to the patriarchs in a visible shape, as a prelude or token of his future incarnation.

Nor did he favour the patriarchs only with such a visit, but the prophets were blessed with it too. *Isaiah* vi. is a plain instance of it, as we have shewn before, where Isaiah saw Christ in great magnificence and glory.

Ezekiel had the same favour also, and that frequently: Ezek. i. 26, *And above the firmament*, that was over the heads of the living creatures, *was the likeness of a throne—and the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it;* verse 28, *This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the* LORD [or Jehovah]; *and when I saw it, I fell on my face, and I heard a voice of one that spake.* Chap. iii. 23, he enjoyed the same vision; and *chap.* viii. 1, 2, 3, 4, he was favoured with it again, and *the glory of the God of Israel was there.* Chap. x. 15, 19, 20, the same again; and xi. 22.

Amos also saw God in the form of a man or angel, *Amos* vii. 7, for *he stood upon a wall—with a plumb-line in his hand*, and talked with him; and *chap.* ix. 1, he stood on the altar and spake to him.

Zechariah, in the first six chapters of his prophecy, conversed with *the angel of the* LORD, in the form of a man, as *chap.* i. 9, and ii. 1, 3, and iii. 1, &c. Yet this angel sometimes seems to be the same with *the* LORD [or Jehovah] as i. 19, 20, and ii. 1, 3, 5, and iii. 1, 2.

Now that most or all of these appearances was Jesus Christ, is generally owned by Christians of all ages, and all parties; there are scarce any that have denied it.

And it is evident, that in these and other places, this *Angel* assumes the peculiar and distinguishing titles of the great God to himself: In his appearance to the more ancient fathers, he called himself *God Almighty*, as in *Exod.* vi. 3. But when he appeared to Moses, he made himself known by his name JEHOVAH; verses 2, 3, *And God spake unto Moses, and said unto him, I am the* LORD [or Jehovah]: *And I appeared unto*

Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty; but by my name JEHOVAH *was I not known to them.*

Now it was not possible for those to whom he appeared to distinguish him from the true and eternal God, when he used those express words, *I am God Almighty*, or all-sufficient, *I am* JEHOVAH, *the* LORD; I AM THAT I AM; *I am the God of Abraham*, &c. and consequently they were necessarily exposed to the danger of idolatry, and in a manner, I may say, they were unavoidably led into it, if the person speaking to them were not really the true and eternal God, the proper object of divine worship.

It seems to me but a poor and feeble evasion to say, that all these magnificent and distinguishing names and titles of the great and blessed God might be assumed by the Angel, or Christ, though he were but a creature, because he came in the name, and with the authority of the true God. 1. It is by no means agreeable to the majesty and high jealousy of God to give his name and glory thus to another, without any sufficient and most evident token of distinction. 2. It was too assuming and presumptuous in a creature thus to personate God, his Maker, without some present and apparent distinguishing marks of his own inferiority. And, 3. It was too hard and invincible a temptation to Abraham, and Jacob, and Moses themselves to practice idol-worship, and give divine honours to that which was not God.

It is therefore made clear to me with abundant evidence, that in all these appearances the true and eternal God himself was present; and, as it is expressed concerning Christ, *Colos.* ii. 9, so in those figures and appearances, whether of light or fire, of a man or an angel, there dwelt all the fulness of the godhead bodily.

2. *The Lord of hosts* is another glorious and distinguishing title of God: He that is supreme over all the hosts or armies of heaven and earth. 2 Sam. vi. 2, *God, whose name is called the Lord of hosts.* 2 Sam. vii. 26, *The Lord of hosts is the God over Israel.* Psalm xxiv. 10, *The Lord of hosts—is the king of glory.* Isaiah i. 24, *Thus saith the Lord, the Lord of hosts, the Mighty One of Israel.* Isaiah vi. 3, *Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts, the whole earth is full of his glory.* And there are a multitude of places beside to this purpose in the word of God.

Yet this title is applied to Christ even in some of these very places, where it is mentioned as God's distinguishing character: *Hosea* xii. 3, 4, 5, where the history of Jacob's wrestling with a man or an angel is recorded, it is said, *By his strength he had power with God, yea he had power over the angel, and prevailed: He wept and made supplications unto him: He found him in Bethel, and there he spake with us. Even the Lord God of hosts, the Lord is his memorial.* You see here that God, the Lord God of hosts, is the angel with whom Jacob wrestled. So Isaiah viii. 13, 14, *Sanctify the Lord of hosts himself, and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread, and he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling, and for a rock of offence, to both the houses of Israel:* Which is interpreted concerning Jesus Christ, 1 Peter ii. 6, 8, He is the "chief corner-stone laid in Zion, elect and precious," as *Isaiah* xxviii. 16; and "a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence:" Which appears still with greater evidence, if you compare *Psalm* cxviii. 22, with *Matt.* xxi. 42, and *Luke* ii. 34.

Many other instances of this kind we may find in the same prophet; as Isaiah liv. 5, *Thy Maker is thine husband, (the Lord of hosts is his name) and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel, the God of the whole earth shall he be called;* compared with 2 Cor. xi. 2, *I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.*

God, our Maker, is our husband, as the prophet speaks; and Christ, our Redeemer, is the one husband to whom we are espoused by the apostle. But I proceed to the next.

3. *King of kings, and Lord of lords,* is another title which God assumes to himself. Deut. x. 17, *The Lord your God is God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty, and a terrible, &c.* 1 Tim. vi. 15, 16, *The blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords—whom no man hath seen, nor can see: To whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen.* Yet this title is ascribed to Christ, Rev. xvii. 14, *The Lamb shall overcome—for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings.* And Rev. xix. 13, 16, *His name is called the Word of God,* as John i. 1; *and he hath on his vesture, and on his thigh a name written, King of kings, and Lord of lords.*

4. *The First and the Last* is a peculiar title of God; that is, the first cause and the last end of all things: He by whom all things were made, and for whose glory they were designed: He who existed before all; and should all things cease to be, he would exist for ever the same. Isaiah xli. 4, *I the Lord, the First, and with the last, I am He.* Isaiah xliv. 6, *Thus saith the Lord, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer, the Lord of hosts, I am the First, and I am the Last, and besides me there is no God.* So the 48th of Isaiah, verses 11, 12, *I will not give my glory unto another. Hearken to me, O Jacob—I am He, I am the First, I also am the Last.* Yet our Lord Jesus assumes this title himself, Rev. i. 17, 18, *Fear not, I am the First and the Last: I am he that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore. Amen.* And Rev. ii. 8, *These things saith the First and the Last, who was dead and is alive.* Rev. i. 11, *I am Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last.* These verses without controversy belong to Christ; and perhaps the eighth verse also, *I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the Ending, saith the Lord; which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.*

III. Attributes of God ascribed to Christ.

These are omniscience, omnipresence and omnipotence, eternity and immutability.

1. *Omniscience,* or the knowledge of all things, and particularly of the heart of man, and his secret thoughts. This is a peculiar property of God: Isaiah xli. 21, 23, *Produce your cause, saith the Lord; bring forth your strong reasons, saith the king of Jacob —shew the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods.* 1 Kings viii. 39, *For Thou, even Thou only, knowest the hearts of all the children of men.* Amos iv. 13, *He that formeth the mountains, and createth the wind, and declareth unto man what is his thought—the Lord, the God of hosts is his name.* Jer. xvii. 9, 10, *The heart* of man *is deceitful above all things—who can know it? I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.*

Now this universal and extensive knowledge of all things, even of the hearts and of the thoughts of men, which is so special a property of godhead, is ascribed to Jesus Christ almost in the same words in which it is attributed to the Father: John xxi. 17, Peter saith to Christ, *Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee.* John ii. 24, 25, *Jesus knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man; for he knew what was in man.* Matt. xii. 25, *And Jesus knew their thoughts.* Rev. ii. 23, *All the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts, and I will give unto every one of you according to your works.* Where we may remark the emphasis of this expression; Christ does not say merely, " I can search the heart and

try the reins;" but, "I am he which searcheth the hearts," &c. using the very words of Jeremiah the prophet, as though he would have said, "That very character of godhead belongs to me, I am that omniscient Being."

2. *Omnipresence* is a distinguishing perfection of God, which implies the immediate presence of God in all places; taking cognizance of, and managing all the affairs of his universal kingdom; Psalm cxxxix. 7, *Whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there; if I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there.* And this is the common consolation that God gives to his people wheresoever they are: *Fear not, for I am with thee*, Isaiah xli. 10, and xliii. 5, &c. And he gives this encouragement to his people, and this terror to his enemies; Jeremiah xxiii. 24, *Can any hide himself in secret places, that I shall not see him? saith the Lord: Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord.*

And so does our Lord Jesus Christ fill heaven, and earth, and all things; for the church is called "the body of Christ," and *the fulness of him that filleth all in all;* Eph. i. 23. He promises his presence with his people in the same divine language, Matt. xviii. 20, *Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them;* Matt. xxviii. 20, *Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.*

The presence of the Lord Jehovah, both in heaven and on earth at the same time, seems to be intimated, Gen. xix. 24, *Then the* LORD [Jehovah] *rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the* LORD [Jehovah] *out of heaven.* What has been said before concerning the appearances of Christ, as the angel of the covenant, to the patriarchs, makes it evident that the Jehovah on earth, who had been a little before talking with Abraham about the destruction of Sodom, was our Lord Jesus Christ: And since there is but one Jehovah, he must be the same with Jehovah in heaven; and this is further confirmed by a parallel text, John iii. 13, *And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.*

3. *Omnipotence*, or almighty power, is another divine attribute that I shall name in this place. *Almighty*, is so peculiar a character of godhead, that God takes it for his very title in above fifty places of the Old Testament. It is expressed in the Hebrew by the word שדי, *Shaddai*, and in several places of the book of the Revelation by παντοκράτως, *Pantocrator*, in the Greek. Now our Lord Jesus Christ is this Almighty wheresoever he appeared to the patriarchs in a visible form under this name; as to Abraham, *Gen.* xvii. 1; to Jacob, *Gen.* xxv. 11. *Gen.* xlviii. 3; and perhaps it is he who speaks, *Rev.* i. 8: And the apostle Paul tells us, *Phil.* iii. 21, that he has power *to subdue all things unto himself.*

4. The attribute of *eternity*, or without beginning or end, is also a peculiar distinguishing perfection of God. Psalm xc. 2, *From everlasting to everlasting thou art God.* The eternity of God is also denoted by that title of his, *I am the First, and I am the Last, and besides me there is no God;* Isaiah xliv. 6. Now our Lord Jesus Christ has this same eternity; for he is that God, whose *throne is for ever and ever;* Heb. i. 8. He is the *Alpha and Omega*, the *First and the Last*, Rev. i. 11, and ii. 8. And the historical eternity of Melchisedeck, whose beginning of days and end of life are not mentioned in history, renders him a proper type of Christ, the Son of God, who has *neither beginning of days, nor end of life*, and who must have real and true eternity to answer this type; *Heb.* vii. 3.

5 The last attribute I shall mention is, *immutability*, or unchangeableness. This

God assumes to himself as a peculiar glory. See Mal. iii. 6, *I am the Lord, I change not.* So is Christ unchangeable: *Heb.* i. 12, The heavens and earth *shall be changed, but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail.* Heb. xiii. 8, *Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.*

IV. Divine works or operations ascribed to Christ.

The creation of the world is a work of almighty power, and belongs only to God. Gen. i. 1, *In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.* It is ascribed to him in Scripture as a distinguishing character of godhead: Heb. iii. 4, *He that built all things is God.* The Lord himself maintains this as his own prerogative: Isaiah xliv. 24, *I am the Lord, that maketh all things, and stretcheth forth the heavens alone, that spreadeth abroad the heaveus by myself:* Yet this almighty work is attributed to Christ, John i. 1, 3, *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made;* and verse 10, *The world was made by him.* Psalm cii. 25, 26, 27, *Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of thy hands: They shall perish, but thou shalt endure, &c.* All which three verses are spoken concerning Christ, as appears in Heb. i. 10, &c. *Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of thine hands, &c.*

And here it is proper to take notice of four things:

1. That the way whereby God creates all things, is by his word, to shew with what ease almighty power performs so divine a work: Gen. i. 3, *And God said, Let there be light, and there was light.* Psalm xxxiii. 9, *He spake, and it was done, he commanded, and it stood fast.* And Heb. xi. 3, *The worlds were framed by the word of God.* And it is in the same manner that our Lord Jesus Christ is said to uphold all things, *viz.* " by the word of his power," *Heb.* i. 3, which signifies his mighty, or rather almighty word.*

2. It may further be observed, that as God is the first cause of all created beings, so he is the last end of all. All things were made for him, as well as by him; Rev. iv. 11, *Thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.* Heb. ii. 10, *It became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things,* which is a description of God. Even so all things were created for Christ, as well as by him; see Col. i. 16, 17, *By him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible; whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him, and for him. And he is before all things, and by him all things consist,* or are conserved in their being and appointed station and order.

3. I remark yet further under this head, that creation is such a peculiar work of God, that his existence or being, his very nature, power, and godhead, are certainly and infallibly inferred from it, as the apostle Paul assures us, Rom. i. 20, *The invisible things of* God *from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and godhead; so that they are without*

* Here it may be noted, that it is not the word λογος, *logos*, that is either used in the *Heb.* i. 3, or in *Heb.* xi. 3, which is generally chosen when the Father is represented as acting by his Son or the personal WORD; but the word ρημα, *rema*, is used in both these places, to shew that the Son of God upholds the creation by a mere word of command, acting in the same easy, and almighty, and divine manner as the Father.

excuse; even they who do not glorify that being as God, whom they may easily know by the work of creation. Thence it follows, that our Lord Jesus Christ must be the true God, must have eternal power and godhead, and must be glorified as God, since he created all things: For if any being that had not eternal power and godhead could create a world, then St. Paul's argument is feeble, and falls to the ground; then the visible things of the world do not prove the existence of an invisible, eternal, and almighty God.

Human reason can find out no higher being than Him, by whom all things were created, even that eternal power and godhead which made all things, and was before all things, even from eternity. Now if Jesus Christ be the Creator, then he is the highest being that reason can find out, and demands all the honours of true godhead.

4. It may be observed, in the last place, that if our Lord Jesus Christ were but a mere man, and not the Creator of the heavens and the earth, and yet had the honour and worship of a God given to him, he seems to fall under that sentence of destruction which is pronounced by the true and living God; *Jer.* x. 11, *The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens.* But this leads me to the last distinguishing character of godhead:

V. Divine worship ascribed to Christ.

Religious worship is so peculiar a prerogative of God, that he will by no means suffer any meaner being to share in it. He assumes this character to himself with a divine jealousy, lest any thing beneath God should partake of it; Deut. vi. 13, 14, 15, *Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and serve him, and shalt swear by his name. Ye shall not go after other Gods, for the Lord thy God is a jealous God among you, lest the anger of the Lord thy God be kindled against thee, and destroy thee from off the face of the earth.* This charge is repeated again, *Deut.* x. 20, and it is cited by our Lord Jesus Christ in these words, Matt. iv. 10, *It is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.* The first command doubtless includes this meaning, *Thou shalt have no other gods before me,* that is, no other objects of worship; and *Exod.* xxxiv. 14, repeats it, *Thou shalt worship no other God; for the Lord whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God.*

Yet it is abundantly evident, that our Lord Jesus Christ is the proper object of worship, both for angels and men; Heb. i. 6, *And again when he bringeth in the first-begotten into the world, he saith, Let all the angels of God worship him;* which is cited from Psalm xcvii. 7, *Worship him, all ye gods:* Upon which account our Lord Jesus Christ may be called the God of gods, as well as the Father; *Deut.* x. 17. *Psalm* cxxxvi. 2; since angels, which are called *gods,* must worship him. And let it be noted, that if our translation be right, this is not that worship or honour which is given him as Mediator by the Father's appointment, upon the account of his sufferings and death, as it is elsewhere expressed, but upon the account of his original divine nature, and as God now taking flesh: Though it must be confessed the greek words rather bear this sense, "When he bringeth again his first-begotten into the world," which may refer to his resurrection; yet still it is evident, that angels must worship him.

Our Lord Jesus Christ was worshipped as the true God, the Lord Jehovah, by the patriarchs, when he appeared unto them in a visible shape under the Old Testament.

He was worshipped also when he dwelt on earth very often; but I will not cite nor insist on particular instances of this, because some may doubt whether this were not

sometimes a mere high degree of reverence and obeisance paid to him under the surprising influence of his miracles, which does scarce amount to religious worship, since his godhead was not then so fully discovered to his disciples, as to carry them above all doubt of his Messiahship or his Deity. But we have plain testimonies of divine worship paid to him after his resurrection; for Thomas honoured him as "his Lord and his God," *John* xx. 28. He was worshipped by Stephen, with his dying breath, *Acts* vii. 59; and with him that first martyr entrusted his departing soul. Nor do we ever find the least hint of his dislike or prohibition of worship. Nay, he commends the faith of Thomas calling him "Lord and God." Whereas good men and angels have ever forbid worship to be paid to them, as being due to God alone. So when Cornelius worshipped Peter, *Acts* x. 26, Peter forbid him, and said, *Stand up; I myself also am a man.* So when John worshipped the angel, *Rev.* xix. 10, and xxii. 8, 9, he refused the worship twice, and said, *See thou do it not: I am thy fellow-servant—worship God;* that is, "God only is the proper object of thy worship."

It may be very properly observed concerning these two texts in the book of Revelation, where the angel refuses worship, and directs it to be paid only to God, that this was done after the full glorification of Christ, when God had appointed every knee to bow to him, and exalted him in our nature to his full majesty and dominion, and when he was known and adored by the church as the proper object of worship. Now if God only was to be worshipped in that day, it is a plain consequence, that Christ is God.

That this worship is due to Christ, is further confirmed by the express orders which are given by God himself, both in the Old and New Testament, for the worship of his Son Jesus Christ: Psalm xlv. 11, *He is thy Lord, and worship thou him.* John v. 23, *That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father.* And the great and blessed God, who is so jealous of his own prerogative and worship, would never have suffered those practices, much less would he have commanded them, if Christ had not been really the true God, and in some way and manner one with himself, and fit to receive the same divine honours.

Objection. Some may be ready to say, this is a sort of lower adoration, a subordinate sort of divine worship, that is paid to Jesus Christ, who is called God in Scripture; whereas God the Father must have supreme divine worship, and reserves to himself still this supreme and distinguishing prerogative of true godhead.

Answer I. This seems to be but a vain evasion, because the Scripture knows no such distinctions of supreme and subordinate divine or religious worship.

It must be granted, as I have hinted before, that the Scripture sometimes uses the word *worship* for other honours than what are divine and religious; as, 1 Chron. xxix. 20, *They bowed their heads, and worshipped the Lord and the king.* Matt. xviii. 26, "The servant fell down and worshipped his Lord:" *Rev.* iii. 9, where Christ himself says to the church of Sardis, *I will make them to come and worship before thy feet:* And perhaps some who knew not that Christ was God, might pay this sort of worship to him on earth. Worship, in this sense, signifies only an extraordinary degree of honour paid to any superior person or character, even as we use the word in English, when we call several characters, or societies of men, *worshipful.* But this is not divine or religious

worship, such as was appointed to be paid to Christ in his exalted state, and was never forbid even in his state of humiliation.

Now in religious and divine worship there is no mention made of two sorts or degrees of it. But if such distinctions were necessary to be observed in our worshipping the Father and the Son, it seems necessary that the Scripture should have plainly and expressly told us of it somewhere, lest we run into the danger and heinous guilt of idolatry, by paying the same divine worship to both. There are so many plain expressions that encourage proper divine worship to be paid to Christ, and no plain expressions that give us any notion of a meaner or inferior divine worship, that either the Scriptures seem defective in a most material point of religion, or Jesus must be worshipped with proper divine honours as the Father.

Answer II. If Christ were to be worshipped merely with inferior worship, this would be to set up an inferior god; and thus the christian religion, whose professed design was to abolish polytheism among the nations, and to root out the worship of many gods, some of higher and some of lower rank, even this very christian religion would but more effectually establish it hereby; and the apostles would evidently build up again the things they destroyed. The very applying the name of God so frequently to our Lord Jesus Christ, and ascribing any thing of divine characters or worship to him, if he be not the true and living God, would seem to be an unpardonable fault and gross absurdity in those men, I mean, the evangelists and the apostles: For they professed to be sent from God to destroy the heathen superstition, which consisted much in the worship of superior and inferior deities, and to turn the gentiles from these vanities to the knowledge and worship of the one true and living God. See *Acts* xiv. 15; xvii. 23, 24. *Gal.* iv. 8.

Answer III. It is evident, that when Christ appeared to the patriarchs as the Lord Jehovah, and assumed the glorious names and titles of God in his converse with them, he was worshipped with supreme honour as the supreme God; for they thought him to be so according to his own assertions, *I am the Lord.* They could have no notion of supreme and subordinate worship. Now it is very strange to suppose, what some would persuade us, that after all his services and sufferings he should be rewarded only with subordinate and inferior worship, who had so long before enjoyed the supreme.

The objectors will inquire then, what is that advancement of honour which Christ received as the reward of his sufferings? I answer, He was worshipped before as God, now as God-man and Mediator: Before he might be worshipped as Θεὸς λόγος, *God the word;* now as God the word in flesh, as God incarnate; that the whole human nature might see and know itself united to the object of divine worship.

How far the blessed soul of our Lord Jesus may know and receive its distinct share of the thanks and praises which ascend from the saints on earth, is a secret not so clearly discovered in Scripture: Surely such sacred and inimitable zeal for his Father's glory, such astonishing compassion to lost mankind, such a life and such a death, such a conflict and such a victory, deserve the highest honours and glories that we can pay to a creature. And doubtless his exalted human nature receives them from all the blessed spirits above. *Glory, and honour, and immortality,* were the rewards promised to every son of Adam who fulfilled the law of God, *Rom.* ii. 7; and much more are they become due to the second Adam, the man Christ Jesus, who fulfilled the law in every point,

and, by his most illustrious obedience, magnified it and made it honourable beyond expression.

We may add further also, that since the man Jesus hath received so glorious an advancement at the right-hand of God, we may reasonably suppose, that his human powers have a vast and extensive cognizance of his churches on earth; and that he partakes of all those circumstances of the honour done to his whole sacred person, which are not purely divine and incommunicable; though we have no warrant to separate and divide the human nature from the divine, in the honours which we pay him.

Still it is the godhead of Christ that is the standing and eternal ground of all that divine and religious worship, which we are bound to give him, though we borrow many motives from his life, his love, and his death. And since the great God has so often in his word assumed this sort of worship to himself, as his own prerogative and his distinguishing character, I am persuaded he would never have enjoined nor indulged worship to be paid to Jesus Christ in such a manner as is done in Scripture, how great soever his services had been to God or man, if he had not the fulness of the godhead dwelling in him bodily.

This shall suffice to answer the objection arising from this distinction of higher and lower worship.

I might now run through the several particular acts of divine worship, which the Scripture makes the peculiar rights of God, and yet ascribes them to Christ: Such as,

Believing or trusting in him: John xiv. 1, *Let not your heart be troubled*, saith Christ; *ye believe in God, believe also in Me;* Rom. xv. 12, *In Him shall the gentiles trust.*

Calling upon him, and praying to him: Rom. x. 13, *For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord,* that is, Christ, *shall be saved.* Paul prayed to him, to take away his *thorn in the flesh;* 2 Cor. xii. 8, *For this I besought the Lord thrice that it might depart from me.*

Adoring and praising him: Rev. v. 13, *And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth—and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I, saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever.*

Swearing by his name: Rom. ix. 1, *I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost.*

Now all these divine honours done to our Lord Jesus, are foretold in the Old Testament, and required or practised in the New Testament, and would be so many affronts to the supreme majesty and dignity of the blessed God the Father, if Jesus Christ were not one and the same God with him, as we shall shew in the following Propositions.

A variety of other texts might be cited to make good these seventh and eighth Propositions; but I choose rather, in this place, to content myself with citing those which are most unexceptionable, and have no just ground of controversy belonging to them.

To sum up all, let me make this one remark: That the places of Scripture which I have brought to shew what are the peculiar and distinguishing characters of godhead, are so plain and easy to be understood, and those Scriptures which apply these very same characters to our Lord Jesus Christ are so obvious, so evident, so naturally

applicable to him, even in the divinest sense of them, that it needs a good deal of skill, and wit, and criticism, to divert them to another sense: If it needed but half so much art and critical subtilty to apply those Scriptures to Jesus Christ as it does to turn them away from him, one might be tempted indeed to doubt his godhead, or to deny it.

It is plain that the arian and socinian doctrines, which deny our Lord Jesus Christ to be the true and eternal God, cannot be supported in opposition to such obvious evidences of Scripture, without more skill and learning, more subtilty and nice arts of distinction to evade the sense of plain words, than the bulk of common Christians can ever be furnished with. Day-labourers and tradesmen, children and servants, of the meanest rank, reading their Bibles, would naturally be led into the belief of Christ's divinity; for they could never find out how to explain away such manifest expressions concerning the godhead of Christ, and make them signify a mere creature. Thence I would take leave to infer, that arian and socinian doctrines are not the doctrines of the Bible, which in matters of such moment and consequence are and must be so easy, open, and clear, that the ignorant and the unlearned may read and understand; "for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

Now the plain Christian, who reads his Bible honestly, and follows the natural meaning of the words, will be led into the most dangerous mistakes, and to the practice of downright idolatry, by the very Bible itself, if these divine characters which I have mentioned are not really applicable to Christ. If Christ were not a partaker of true godhead, I can never imagine that the great God, who is so jealous of his own honour, and so kind and faithful to his people, and who knows how ready mankind is to take every occasion to run into idol-worship, would ever lay such stumbling-blocks or temptations in their way, and leave them in his word for the use of all ages. I cannot persuade myself that this God would have let those passages stand in the holy Scriptures as our rule of faith and practice, which have such a natural tendency to diminish his own dignity, to give away his divine prerogatives to another, and to deceive the humble and the simple into such pernicious snares, and that in a point of so high and awful importance.

I proceed now to consider which of the peculiar divine characters are ascribed in Scripture to the Holy Ghost, and in this part of my discourse I shall be much briefer; not only because the Scripture has not occasion to give half so many proofs of the godhead of the Holy Spirit, but because, if the true and proper godhead of Christ be fully proved, that of the Holy Spirit will be easily admitted.

"Divine characters ascribed to the Holy Spirit."

I. The peculiar name of God, which is ascribed to the Holy Spirit in Scripture, is *Jehovah*.

The Spirit of God is the same with Jehovah: Isaiah vi. 3, *One* of the seraphim *cried to another, saying, Holy, holy, holy, is the* LORD *of hosts*, [in the original it is Jehovah,] *the whole earth is full of his glory.* And *the voice* of this Jehovah said, verse 9, 10, *Go and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not, &c.* Now that these words were spoken by the Holy Ghost, is evident from Acts xxviii. 25, 26, *Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet, unto our fathers, saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive, &c.* Nor is it any sufficient objection that these

words are applied to Christ, John xii. 41, *These things said Esaias, when he saw his* [that is Christ's] *glory, and spake of him.* For Christ and the Holy Ghost are one in godhead, as we shall shew hereafter.

Deut. xxxii. 12, *The* LORD [or Jehovah] *alone did lead him,* that is, Israel, in the wilderness. The prophet Isaiah speaking of this matter, ascribes it to the Holy Spirit, Isaiah lxiii. 14, *As a beast goeth down into the valley, the Spirit of the Lord caused him* [that is, Israel] *to rest; so didst thou lead thy people, to make* thy name glorious. Now either the Spirit is Jehovah, or Jehovah alone did not lead them.

Psalm xcv. 3, *The* LORD [or Jehovah] *is a great God, and a great king above all gods.* Verse 7, &c. *To-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, as in the day of temptation in the wilderness: When your fathers tempted me, and proved me, and saw my works. Forty years long was I grieved with this generation;* which words are cited by St. Paul, as spoken by the Holy Ghost, Heb. iii. 7, 8, 9, &c. *Wherefore as the Holy Ghost saith, To-day, if ye will hear his voice, &c. When your fathers tempted me, and—I was grieved with that generation.* And this is further confirmed, Isaiah lxiii. 10, *They rebelled, and vexed his Holy Spirit.* And Stephen reproving the Jews, Acts vii. 51, said, *Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: As your fathers did, so do ye.* Nor is it any just objection against this, that they were said to "tempt Christ in the wilderness," 1 *Cor.* x. 9; for in point of godhead Christ and the Holy Spirit are one.

II. The peculiar titles of God, which seem to be used promiscuously for God the Father, or for the Holy Spirit, are these, *viz. the God of Israel,* and *the Lord of hosts.*

The Holy Spirit is represented as one with the God of Israel, 2 Sam. xxxiii. 2, 3, *The Spirit of the* LORD, [or of Jehovah] *spake by me, and his word was in my tongue. The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over men must be just.* Thus the Spirit of the Lord is the same with the God and the Rock of Israel.

He is also called *the Lord of hosts* in the text before cited, *Isaiah* vi. on which I shall not enlarge.

III. The peculiar attributes of God ascribed to the Holy Spirit are, omnipresence and omniscience.

1. *Omnipresence* is attributed to the Holy Spirit, Psalm cxxxix. 7, *Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? And whither shall I flee from thy presence?* It is in vain to flee from one who is every where. John xiv. 16, 17, *the Spirit of truth* is promised to abide with the saints for ever, to be in them, to dwell in them: *I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another comforter, that he may abide with you for ever.—He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.* Rom. viii. 11, He "dwells in believers," according to his promise; and makes them his "holy temple," 1 *Cor.* vi. 19; and is in all times, and in all places, wheresoever his saints and servants are distributing his several gifts and graces: 1 Cor. xii. 11, *All these worketh the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will:* Which expression carries as it were a divine sovereignty in it.

2. *Omniscience* belongs also to the Holy Spirit. 1 Cor. ii. 10, *The Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.* It is *the Spirit of Christ* that was in the prophets *which testified* a thousand years *before-hand the sufferings of Christ;* 1 Peter i. 11. And this is one peculiar property of godhead, *Isaiah* xli. 23, where God challenges

all other pretenders to godhead to vie with him: *Shew the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods.* Many minute circumstances of the birth, life, and death of Christ, as well as his resurrection and the propagation of the gospel, how exactly were they foretold by ancient prophets, and all through the inspiration of this Spirit of prophecy! 2 Peter i. 21, *Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.*

3. *Eternity* is another attribute of God: And since some properties of God are ascribed to the Holy Spirit, eternity must in the same sense belong to him also. Perhaps it is he who is called *the eternal Spirit,* Heb. ix. 14: *The blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself, &c.* Though some persons rather understand this of the eternal godhead of our Lord Jesus Christ himself.

But whether it be the one or the other that is there designed, yet I would not build an argument upon the mere doubtful criticism of a greek word, and pretend it to be fully convincing, since that learned writer Doctor Waterland himself, when he is pleading for the eternity of Christ from Micah v. 2, *his goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting,* confesses the argument "is but probable, since there is not ground sufficient for calling it certain and indisputable:" Only this he adds by way of remark, "That whosoever should undertake to prove the eternity of God the Father from any express words, either of the Old or New Testament, would find his proof liable to the same difficulty and uncertainty, from the ambiguity of the hebrew or greek phrases used to denote eternity.

IV. Divine works are attributed to the blessed Spirit; as "creation of the world," the "change of the heart, or regeneration," and "the raising the dead."

1. The work of creation, which has been proved before to be a divine work, is attributed to him, Job xxvi. 13, *By his Spirit he hath garnished the heavens;* Job xxxiii. 4, *The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life.* Psalm xxxiii. 6, *By the word of the Lord were the heavens made: And all the host of them by the breath,* or Spirit, *of his mouth;* for it is the same word, רוח *ruach,* which is translated *spirit* in the two foregoing texts, is rendered *breath* in this.

Acts iv. 24, 25, *Lord, thou art God, who hast made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is: Who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage? &c.* He who spake by the mouth of David, is here declared to be that God who is the Creator of all things; but the Holy Ghost is he who spake by the mouth of David, as appears from his own witness in 2 Sam. xxiii. 2, 3, *The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, &c.* Nor only does David the prophet thus witness concerning himself, but the apostle Peter does the same, Acts i. 16, *The Holy Ghost, by the mouth of David, spake concerning Judas, &c.* Therefore the Holy Ghost is the Creator of all things.

2. The work of changing the heart, and of new creation, belongs to the great God. *Prov.* xxi. 1, "The heart even of kings is in the hand of the Lord; it is he that turneth them whithersoever he will." And when the heart is turned from sin to God, it is said to be his workmanship; *Ephes.* ii. 10, by him we "are created unto good works." And *Jude* verse 1, we are said to be *sanctified by God the Father.* God assumes this prerogative to himself, Lev. xx. 8, *I am the Lord which sanctifieth you.* Yet this very work of new creation, or sanctification, is frequently in Scripture ascribed to the Holy Spirit: Rom. xv. 16, The gentiles are *sanctified by the Holy Ghost;* and we are *chosen*

to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit, 2 Thess. ii. 13. 1 Peter i. 2. Upon this account it is, that the saints who are described as *born of God*, John i. 13, and 1 John v. 1, 3, are said to be *born of the Spirit*, John iii. 5, 6, 8.

3. The work of raising the dead is a divine work, which is also ascribed to the Holy Spirit. That it is a work which seems to be appropriated to godhead, St. Paul intimates, *Rom.* iv. 17; "He who quickens the dead, and calls the things which are not as though they were," is a description of God. And God is described in the same manner, *Rom.* viii. 11, "He that raised up Christ from the dead." And that this was a glorious instance of his divine power, see *Ephes.* i. 19, 20. Now this work, both of raising Christ and all the saints from the dead, is ascribed to the Holy Spirit, 1 Peter iii. 18, *Christ—being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit.* Rom. viii. 11, *He that raised up Christ from the dead, shall also quicken your mortal bodies, by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.*

I am come now to the last distinguishing character of godhead, and that is, to be the object of religious worship.

V. Divine worship is paid to the Holy Spirit.

Baptism is a sacred ceremony, whereby we are devoted and given up to God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ. But the Holy Spirit is not omitted in this piece of worship; Matt. xxviii. 19, *Baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.* So that we are dedicated to the Holy Ghost in this solemnity, even as we are to God the Father.

Here we may make this just remark, *viz.* That it can hardly be supposed, that Christ should appoint this solemn entrance into Christianity, by baptizing men in the name of the one God and two mere creatures; but since they are joined, we may much rather conclude, that Christ himself, together with the Holy Ghost, are partakers of true deity, as well as the Father; otherwise, as a late writer says, the office of baptism would be an invincible stumbling-block both to Jews and gentiles.

The Jews could not bear the least appearance of idolatry, after they had smarted so severely for it under the babylonish captivity, and would never afterward suffer any to be joined with the true God in their worship. Thus St. Paul testifies concerning them, that "they abhorred idols," *Rom.* ii. 22.

And as for the gentiles, it was the main design of Christianity to root out idolatry from among them, "to turn them from idols to the living God;" 1 *Thess.* i. 9.

Now if the Son and Holy Ghost were inferior to the Father, and not the same God, the joining them with the Father in this initiating ordinance, would seem to have a very broad appearance of idolatry: And thus the Jews would have been effectually prejudiced against the gospel; and the gentiles would have been rather confirmed in the worship of idols, or that which is not God.

Another thing wherein religious worship seems to be paid to the Holy Spirit, is this, *viz.* that the apostle prays for the blessing to descend from the Holy Spirit on the Corinthians, in the same way and manner in which the blessing of the Father and Son is prayed for; 2 Cor. xiii. 14, *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all.* If this be a petition or prayer, it is a prayer to the sacred Three. And the Holy Ghost is the object of this worship, as well as the Father or Son.

It seems evident also, that the Holy Spirit was worshipped in some of those texts which were cited from the Old Testament, to prove the divine names, titles, and attributes to belong to him; as *Isaiah* vi. *Psalm* xcvi. &c. which I shall not repeat.

And since it is he who enlightens, who comforts, who regenerates and sanctifies men, who bestows on the saints so many gifts and graces, distributing them severally as he will, since he knows the hearts of men, and changes and renews their hearts unto holiness, the very reason of things leads us to adore him, and gives sufficient foundation to pray to him for what gifts or graces we want, and to praise and give him thanks for what we have received, as shall be shewn hereafter.

I might take notice here, that several of these same divine characters are ascribed also to Jesus Christ, as the sanctification of sinners, the raising of the dead, &c. but the proofs of the divinity of Christ are sufficient and abundant without these helps.

Thus I have finished the Eighth Proposition, and shewn that these very names, titles, attributes, works, and worship, which are peculiar to God, and incommunicable to another, are ascribed to three by God himself, in his word, which three are distinguished by the names of Father, Son, and Spirit.

After all, suppose a man should object thus: You have pretended to prove the deity of the Son and Spirit, by the ascription of such properties, works, and worship to them, as belong only to the true God: But how do you know that all these can never belong to any creature? As for instance, cannot God communicate to any inferior being a sort of omnipotency, and vest him with almighty power? Or omniscience, and give him universal knowledge? Or immutability, and make him unchangeable? Is it an impossible thing that any being, inferior to the great God, should be capable of forming several parts of the creation? Of changing the hearts of men? Of raising the dead? And is there no sort of religious worship, thanksgiving, and praise, which can be given to any creature, upon the account of some extraordinary and spiritual benefits, received, or to be received, from him? And if so, then the ascription of these things to the Son and Spirit, are not sufficient and certain proofs, that true and proper godhead is ascribed to them. I answer:

Answer. It is not within our present reach, nor does it necessarily concern us, to know how far the powers of a creature can go, how glorious, and powerful, and perfect a creature God can make, or how sublime worship or honours he might have fitted a creature to receive: It is not for us to say, that in the nature of things, it is utterly impossible for any being, beneath a God, to have any one of these powers or characters communicated to him: Yet we dare affirm this, that since God has assumed these properties, these works, this worship, and peculiarised them to himself in his word, and since he describes himself by these characters, to distinguish himself from all inferior beings; he would never suffer any mere creature to stand upon record in his word, with these powers, properties, and characters belonging to him; for this would be to give away his own distinguishing titles and properties. This would be to run counter to that holy jealousy, which he professes for his own name, and to bring perpetual confusion into all parts of religion, as I have shewn in the foregoing Propositions.

PROPOSITION IX.

THERE ARE ALSO SOME OTHER CIRCUMSTANTIAL BUT CONVINCING EVIDENCES, THAT THE SON AND THE SPIRIT HAVE THE TRUE AND PROPER GODHEAD ASCRIBED TO THEM, AS WELL AS THE FATHER.

THERE are many things spoken concerning God, the true and the living God, in some parts of his word, which in other parts of it are ascribed to our Lord Jesus Christ, or to the blessed Spirit.

First, To our Lord Jesus Christ.

1. The final judgment of the world is ascribed to God. Psalm l. 6, *For God is Judge himself.* Rom. iii. 6, *Then how shall God judge the world?* And it is ascribed also to our Lord Jesus Christ. Rom. xiv. 10, *We shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ.* 2 Tim. iv. 1, *The Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing.* And indeed how can we suppose a being who has not divine perfections, capable of such a work? It seems to require an omniscient mind, and an almighty arm, to manifest the secrets of all hearts, and to discover and punish the infinite variety of secret wickednesses in the hearts of men, as well as proclaim and reward the secret workings of piety, in those that have loved God.

2. There is a glorious description of the triumph of God, Psalm lxviii. 4, 8, 17, 18, *He rides upon the heavens by his name* JAH—*The earth shook, the heavens also dropped, at the presence of God,—the God of Israel.—The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels: The Lord is among them as in Sinai, in the holy place. Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive: Thou hast received gifts for men;* which is applied to the ascension of Christ into heaven, Ephes. iv. 8, 10, *Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.—He that descended, is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.* Christ is therefore this Lord, this God, this Jehovah or Jah, whose triumph is there described.

3. The children of Israel, as it is related in Psalm lxxviii. 56, *tempted and provoked the most high God;* which is asserted concerning Christ, 1 Cor. x. 9, *Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed, &c.* Therefore the tempting of Christ is a tempting of the most high God.

4. The kingdom of God is "an everlasting kingdom," *Psalm* cxlv. 13, "and his dominion endures through all generations." Which honour is ascribed to Christ in a citation of the 45th *Psalm*, by St. Paul, Heb. i. 8, *But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever.* And in many other places.

5. Isaiah prophesies, chapter vii. 14, *A virgin shall bear a Son, and shall call his name Immanuel;* which is cited by Matthew, *chapter* i. 23, and his name is interpreted, *God with us:* And this is abundantly confirmed, John i. 1, 14, *The Word*, who was God, *was made flesh, and dwelt among us.* 1 Tim. iii. 16, *Great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh.*

6. John the Baptist was foretold to prepare the way for Christ, who is called *God*, and *Jehovah*, by the prophet Isaiah, chapter xl. 3, *The voice of him that crieth in the*

wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord [Jehovah]; *make straight in the desert a highway for our God;* which is cited and applied to John as the forerunner of Christ, by St. Matthew, chapter iii. 3, *This is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.*

And here it may be observed, that the title Lord *God*, which answers to *Jehovah Elohim*, an incommunicable name of God, is given to Christ, when John the Baptist is described as his forerunner; Luke i. 16, 17, *And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God; and he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias.* The word *him*, that is, Christ, is immediately connected with *the Lord their God*, in the foregoing verse; so that Christ is the Lord our God. See more under the 13th and 17th particulars.

7. God's universal propriety in all things, and his dominion over all things, are asserted in many Scriptures: Psalm ciii. 19, *His kingdom ruleth over all.* And yet Christ says to the Father, even before his death and resurrection, John xvii. 10, *All* things that are *mine are thine, and* all things that are *thine are mine.* John xvi. 15, *All things that the Father hath are mine.* And as Christ is called *Lord over all*, Rom. x. 12, so we find in *Acts* x. 36, Christ is *Lord of all.*

8. The prerogative to forgive sins is assumed by God himself, as a divine character. Isaiah xliii. 25, *I, even I am he that blotteth out thy transgressions, and will not remember thy sins.* Yet *Mark* ii. 5, Christ speaks to the sick of the palsy, *Son, thy sins be forgiven thee. Acts* vii. 60, Stephen prays to Christ, *Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.* And the apostle Paul exhorts the Christians, Colos. iii. 13, *Even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.*

9. The reverence and subjection, which the great God demands for himself, by the prophet Isaiah, is attributed to our Lord Jesus Christ by the apostle Paul, in his Epistle to the Romans. Compare *Isaiah* xlv. 23, with *Rom.* xiv. 10, 11, 12. The words of the prophet are, *I have sworn by myself—that unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear:* And the apostle says, *We shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ. For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.*

10. The blessed God excludes every thing from comparison or competition with himself. *Isaiah* xlvi. 5, *To whom will ye liken me, and make me equal, and compare me, that we may be like?* Yet our Lord Jesus Christ says concerning himself, John xiv. 9, *He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father;* and the apostle Paul adds, *Heb.* i. 3, "he is the brightness of his Father's glory," *and the express image of his person;* and *Phil.* ii. 6, he *thought it not robbery to be equal with God:* Though it must be confessed, that the criticisms which attend this last-named text, take off something from its force and evidence, and render the sense of it a little dubious.

11. Christ is that glorious person, in whom *dwelleth all the fulness of the godhead bodily*, Col. ii. 9; which is too exalted an expression to be given to a mere creature, if the godhead or divine nature were not so united to the man Christ Jesus, as to render him one complex person, God and man.

It is true, that the apostle prays for the Ephesians, that they *may be filled with all the fulness of God;* Ephes. iii. 19. But this can mean no more than a fulness of those

gifts, graces, and manifestations of God, which the primitive Christians enjoyed and hoped for. But the word *godhead* is never used to signify gifts and graces, but only the divine nature, which in its perfection and fulness, dwelt in this peculiar and transcendent manner in Christ alone, and not in his saints. And the addition of the word *bodily*, seems to shew a peculiar union of the godhead to the human nature or body of our Lord Jesus Christ.

12. Our faith and trust in Christ is the same with faith and trust in God, as appears, Jerem. xvii. 5, 7, *Cursed be the man that trusteth in man,—blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is;* compared with Psalm ii. 12, *Blessed are all they that put their trust in him*, that is, Christ.

13. Christ is the Lord our God, by whom we are saved; *Hosea* i. 7, the Lord said, *I will have mercy upon the house of Judah, and will save them by the* LORD [Jehovah] *their God;* compared with Luke ii. 11, *Unto you is born in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.* God the Father, who is Jehovah, saves his church by his Son, who is also Jehovah and their God.

14. That glorious person who is called *the Spirit of God*, Rom. viii. 9, and in many other places of Scripture, is also called *the Spirit of Christ*, in that very same verse, as well as 1 *Peter* i. 11; and *the Spirit of his Son*, Gal. iv. 6: And as he is promised to be "poured out on all flesh," by the Lord our God, *Joel* ii. 27, 28; this was accomplished, *Acts* ii. 16, when Christ "shed forth this Spirit," *verse* 33, and baptized the disciples *with the Holy Ghost and with fire*, as *Matt.* iii. 11. Thence it appears that Christ is that God to whom the Spirit belongs, and he sends it.

15. Christ's own resurrection is attributed to God the Father, *Rom.* vi. 4, and to the Holy Spirit, 1 *Peter* iii. 18; and yet Christ ascribed it to himself, John ii. 19, 21, *Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up*, which *he spake of the temple of his body.* This shews that the same divine power and godhead of the Father, which raised up Christ, dwelt also in the Son and Spirit,

16. That it was our Lord Jesus Christ who died for us is abundantly manifest from all the New Testament; and yet, *Acts* xx. 28, it is said, *Feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood;* and 1 John iii. 16, *Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us.* So that he who shed his blood, and laid down his life for sinners, was the true God: He came into the world, and was born of a virgin, and took upon him the name of *Emmanuel*, or *God with us, God in our nature*, that he might have flesh and blood, which he gave for the redemption of his people. See more under the last particular.

17. After the resurrection of Christ, the apostle Thomas, in a rapture of faith, calls him, *My Lord and my God*, John xx. 28. And our Saviour is so far from reproving him that he commends him, and pronounces those blessed, who should believe the same doctrine, which he professed, without having the same sensible advantages. Now where the words *Lord God* are thus joined, it looks so like the incommunicable title of God, by which he is often described in the Old Testament, that Christ would never have suffered these words of Thomas to pass without a reproof, if he himself had not a real oneness with the great God, and a right to this incommunicable title.

By a comparison of this with what has been said before concerning the visible appearances of God of old, we may grow bold, and say, "Surely this was the Lord God, whose voice Adam heard in the garden, *Gen.* iii. 8: This was the Lord God of

Abraham, *Gen.* xxviii. 13; the "Lord God of your fathers" in the burning bush, *Exod.* iii. 15, &c.

18. Whereas it is said, Rev. xxii. 6, *The Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel, to shew unto his servants the things which must shortly be done;* it is added, verse 16, *I Jesus have sent my angel, to testify to you these things in the churches.* Whence we may reasonably suppose that our Lord Jesus and the Lord God of the prophets, have such an intimate relation to, and union with one another, that these two names may be used without danger, the one for the other. For Christ is "the Lord God of the prophets," as well as "the Lord God of Abraham."

19. There are many other titles and characters attributed to our Lord Jesus Christ, and that so often, and in such a manner, as seems to raise him high above the character of creatures, so that I can hardly think these titles would have been thus attributed to him in Scripture, if he had not godhead in him, even though he had been never so glorious and exalted a creature.

He is called *the truth*, John xiv. 6; *the Amen, the faithful and the true witness*, Rev. iii. 14; which seems to be the name given to God himself, by Isaiah, *chapter* lxv. 16, where prophesying of the times of the gospel, he says, that men shall *bless themselves in the God* "amen," *and shall swear by the God* "amen," which we translate, *the God of truth.* It is in this "amen," in whom the nations of the earth should be blessed, and by whose name they should swear, in the days of Christianity, when "the new heavens and earth are created;" *verse* 17.

Christ is called *the light*, absolutely and without limitation, *John* i. 4. Now *light*, in such an absolute way of expression, is one of the titles of God; 1 John i. 5, *God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.*

He is called *the life*, 1 John i. 2; *truth and life*, John xiv. 6; *the resurrection and the life*, John xi. 25; *the word of life*, 1 John i. 1; *eternal life*, verse 2, and chapter v. 20. Now the *living God*, that has life in himself, and gives life to all things, is a glorious title and character of God, in many places of Scripture. But this seems to be too nearly imitated in these titles given to Christ, if he were not God.

Christ is called *the word*, who *was with God, and* who *was God*, John i. 1. He was in so close an union with the true God, the Father, and so much one with him, that he may be justly called *the true God;* and especially when there is one of the characters of true godhead immediately subjoined, *viz.* that *all things were made by him;* verse 3.

The word is a frequent name of Christ, in the New Testament, especially in the writings of the apostle John: And some critics, well skilled in jewish and hebrew language, have given us a number of instances, where Christ is called *the word of God*, and *word of the Lord*, in the Old Testament also. He is called the "living word," *Heb.* iv. 12, 13, as it should be rendered: *The word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight, but all things are naked and open unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.* Which text carries something too sublime in it for any mere creature; and yet christian writers have generally explained this text concerning our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the "living word of God," speaking to men, in and by the word of his gospel.

Now I will easily grant, that any one of these terms, *truth, light, life, the word, &c.*

if upon some particular occasion only, it had been applied to Christ, would not have been sufficient to prove him to be true God: Yet when all these are applied to Christ, and that in such a manner, or sometimes with such epithets and adjuncts, and in several places of Scripture, it seems to raise our thoughts of Christ necessarily above all created beings, and leads us to ascribe true godhead to him: And especially when these Scriptures are considered, under the light and influence of many other texts which have been cited before, where true and eternal godhead is without all doubt attributed to him.

20. I close all these circumstantial evidences, with that common argument which is found in the lips of almost all Christians, to prove the divinity of Christ, *viz.* that nothing less than the blood of him that was true God, could make satisfaction to divine justice equal to the offences that were given it by our sins. The argument seems, thus far at least, to have a convincing force in it: It is said, that "without blood there is no remission," *Heb.* ix. 22; and it is said also, that "it was not possible for the blood of bulls and of goats to take away sin," *Heb.* x. 4. Now I cannot see any certain reason why God might not have appointed the blood of bulls and goats, to be a sufficient atonement for our sins; or why it was impossible that it should be sufficient, but upon this account only, because it was not an equivalent. For if the justice of God would have been satisfied with any thing less than an equivalent, how can it be said, that it was not possible for the blood of animals to have been appointed for that end, by the sovereign will of God?

But if the governing justice of God insisted upon an equivalent sacrifice, or a satisfaction equal to all the infinite offences of the millions of mankind that are redeemed, then they who deny the godhead of our Lord Jesus Christ are obliged to shew where this equivalent is to be found. I must declare my opinion, that it is the dignity of the man Christ Jesus, as he is united to God, and one with God, that entered into the merit of all his sufferings, and made the price of our redemption an abundant satisfaction for sin, and a glorious equivalent for all the sinners that were redeemed, because they were the sufferings of him who was God.

These are some circumstantial evidences, which shew that true and proper godhead is ascribed to our Lord Jesus in Scripture.

I proceed therefore,

Secondly, To produce the same sort of evidences, concerning the divinity of the Holy Ghost.

1. The inspiration of the prophets, and other holy writers is attributed to God. *Heb.* i. 1, *God who at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake in times past unto the fathers, by the prophets, &c.* and 2 Tim. iii. 16, *All Scripture is given by inspiration of God.* But this very work of inspiration is frequently ascribed to the Holy Spirit. 2 Sam. xxiii. 2, *The Spirit of the Lord spake by me.* Ezek. xi. 5, *The Spirit of the Lord fell upon me, and said unto me, Speak, &c.* 2 Peter i. 21, *Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.* Therefore the Holy Ghost is God.

2. The body of Christ is said to be conceived in the Virgin Mary, by the operation *of the Holy Ghost*, Matt. i. 20; and by "the overshadowing power of the Highest," *Luke* i. 35; that is, the Holy Spirit, by whom divine power is exerted: And yet for this very reason Christ is called *the Son of God*, because he was conceived by the

influence of the Holy Ghost; which would hardly have been expressed in that manner, if the Holy Ghost had not been God.

3. Lying to the Holy Ghost is lying to God, Acts v. 3, 4, *Why hath Satan filled thy heart to lie to the Holy Ghost?—Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God.* The Holy Spirit seems to be called *God* in this text.

4. That God who dwells in us as his temple, is the Holy Spirit; 2 Cor. vi. 16, *Ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them;* compared with 1 Cor. vi. 19, *Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you?* Now for what reason can any thing be called the temple of God, in God's own word, but because God himself dwells in it?

5. To which I might subjoin in the last place, that blasphemy against the Holy Ghost has a greater penalty annexed to it under the gospel, than blaspheming against God or Christ. See Matt. xii. 31, 32, *All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: But whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven, neither in this world, neither in the world to come.* Now it is not to be supposed that if the Holy Ghost were but a mere creature, the sin of blasphemy committed against him, should have a more express and dreadful threatening of utter destruction pronounced against it, than blasphemy against God the Father, or against his Son, who is his express image.

I grant, that the most obvious and direct sense of that threatening, is to denounce damnation without hope upon those who shall wilfully and utterly reject the last and fullest demonstrations of the Messiah, and the brightest evidence of the gospel, by resisting the convictions of the Holy Ghost, in all his miraculous operations. Yet I think it may be worth our inquiry, whether this solemn and awful denunciation of judgment against those obstinate resisters of the gospel, and blasphemers of the Holy Ghost, might not be written in such express and dreadful language to stand as a sacred fence and guard against any attempts to diminish his divine dignity.

Thus I have fulfilled the proposal in the Ninth Proposition, and shewn a variety of other evidences of the deity of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

I will not pretend, that every text which I have here cited, is so plainly or necessarily determined to the sense in which I have cited it, as to be free from all objections; though the greatest part of them cannot reasonably be construed to any other sense, without an unnatural strain and force put upon them, to make them serve some arian or socinian scheme. And there is just reason to believe, that the all-wise God would never have expressed himself in these Scriptures, in such a manner, and used the names of *God,** *Lord, Jehovah,* so promiscuously in speaking of Christ, and of the Holy Spirit, and that without any guard, any exception or limitation, if there had been any error or danger in believing Christ or the Spirit to have proper godhead in them.

I do not pretend to instruct the learned world: My design here was to write for private and unlearned Christians, and to lead them by the fairest and most obvious sense of Scripture into some acquaintance with the great doctrine of the Trinity. And

* See the two last paragraphs, under Proposition II. page 293.

it is my settled opinion, that a Christian can never safely build his faith in any important article of religion, upon such Scriptures as want a great deal of art, and labour, and critical skill, to make them speak that article plainly.

Yet because the adversaries of our faith have endeavoured to pervert the natural sense of many a text, those who have a mind to see how the sense of several of these Scriptures is confirmed by just criticism and reasoning, in opposition to the cavils and objections of men, may consult such authors as have written largely on this subject; as Bishop Pearson, Dr. Barrow, Bishop Bull, Dr. Owen, &c. in the last age, and more lately Mr. Boyse, and Dr. Waterland, in their treatises *Of the Divinity of Christ*, Dr. Waterland's *Sermons* on that subject, Mr. Samuel Mather in his *Two Discourses on the Trinity, and the Godhead of the Holy Ghost*, Mr. Guyse's two volumes of *Sermons on the Deity of Christ and the Holy Spirit*, and Dr. Knight's *Sermons* on that subject, with several others.

I would remark yet further, that though several of these Scriptures, taken singly and alone, will not certainly prove that the peculiar divine characters are ascribed to the Son and the Spirit, because some of them may be otherwise construed; yet when they stand in such a light as I have set them in, and run parallel to, and are connected with so great a number of other Scriptures, that certainly ascribe godhead to the Son and Spirit; I think the most, if not all of these may serve to brighten the evidence, and enforce the conviction.

PROPOSITION X.

THENCE IT NECESSARILY FOLLOWS THAT THESE THREE, VIZ. THE FATHER, THE SON, AND THE HOLY SPIRIT, HAVE SUCH AN INTIMATE AND REAL COMMUNION IN THAT ONE GODHEAD, AS IS SUFFICIENT TO JUSTIFY THE ASCRIPTION OF THOSE PECULIAR AND DISTINGUISHING DIVINE CHARACTERS TO THEM.

IT was the great design of God to discover his nature and his will, and to make himself known to the children of men, by all his revelations to mankind: And when he employed holy men to write his word, it was to preserve these divine discoveries of himself uncorrupted, and to deliver them down to all ages, that he might be known and worshipped according to those revelations of himself, which he hath made. It is only by these divine and distinguishing characters which he has assumed, and peculiarised to himself in his word, that we know what and who God is: Now we can never imagine, that a God who is so jealous of his own honour, and so kind and faithful to his creatures, should ever suffer such peculiar and distinguishing characters of godhead to be ascribed in such a multitude of places of his own word to any thing that is not God, lest he thereby give away all that honour and glory, which it is the very design of his word to appropriate and reserve to himself, and lest he should lead his own people into a dangerous error.

Though I have mentioned this once or twice before, yet my reader will forgive me that I repeat it again, because I would have him always keep it in his eye, and have it deeply impressed upon his mind as an argument, in my esteem, of resistless evidence, and uncontrollable force.

The Son and the Spirit, who have these peculiar divine characters ascribed to them, must therefore have some real and proper communion in the divine nature, some participation or share in the true and eternal godhead: Otherwise the word of God, which was written for our instruction, would be more ready to deceive us than to lead us into truth, and would thereby impeach both the goodness and faithfulness of God.

Let me make in this place two remarks.

Remark I. If any of my readers should think they can refute above twenty of the arguments that I have used to prove the godhead of Christ and the Holy Spirit, by giving those Scriptures another turn of sense; yet let them remember that they cannot go fairly into a denial of their godhead, till they have refuted them all, which I am fully persuaded they will never be able to do.

Remark II. I think I ought here to mention again that which was hinted before, *viz.* That though the ascriptions of deity to the blessed Spirit are not written in Scripture with half so much frequency or evidence, as those ascriptions of deity to the Son of God: Yet if the deity of the Son be well confirmed, that of the Holy Spirit will be readily granted by all. Every proof therefore of the godhead of Christ may be counted a consequential scripture proof of the godhead of the Holy Ghost.

A MORAL ARGUMENT.

BEFORE I dismiss this Proposition, I would ask leave to add one moral argument, to prove that the Son and Holy Spirit have real communion in the divine nature, as well as the Father.

The greatest number of Christians since the days of the apostles, the most religious, the most holy of men, and multitudes of glorious confessors and martyrs, have believed this doctrine of the divinity of the Son and Spirit, and under the influence of this belief have paid divine honours to them both: And this many of them have done with such concurring circumstances, that carry in them a good force of argument, *viz.* they have worshipped them as God, 1. After they have sought the knowledge of the truth with utmost diligence and prayer; 2. When they have been in the holiest and most heavenly frames of spirit, and in their devoutest hours; 3. When they have been under the most sensible impressions of the love of the Father and the Son, and under the most quickening influences of the blessed Spirit himself; 4. In the devotions of a death-bed, and in the songs and doxologies of martyrdom.

Now can we suppose that in such devout and glorious seasons as these are, God the Father should ever thus manifest his own love to souls that are degrading him by worshipping another god? That Jesus Christ should reveal himself in his dying love to souls that are practising idolatry, and worshipping himself, instead of the true God? Or can we believe that the blessed Spirit should give his influences, and his consolations, to encourage and assist such false worship, and himself assume these divine honours, if he had no title to godhead? Or can we imagine that the true and gracious God, should suffer such multitudes of holy souls to be deluded and given up to believe a lie in such an awful and important point, in their most devout moments, and in their dying hour?

PROPOSITION XI.

SINCE THERE IS AND CAN BE BUT ONE TRUE GOD, THESE THREE, WHO HAVE SUCH A COMMUNION IN GODHEAD, MAY PROPERLY BE CALLED THE ONE GOD, OR THE ONLY TRUE GOD.

THE reason of it is this: Because, if God "will not give his glory and his name to any other," as we have before proved; *Isaiah* xlii. 8; then those to whom he has given his name and his glory, are not another, but they are one and the same with himself. There is a sameness of godhead, therefore, that belongs to these three, the Father, the Son, and the Spirit: So that the Son and the Spirit cannot be called another god, or gods; for if they could, this would support, and not destroy the polytheism, or multiplicity of gods, which was acknowledged and believed by the heathen nations.

And perhaps it is better to express this by a sameness of godhead, than by calling it an equality; for equality is more properly found between several distinct beings: Now wherein soever these three are distinct, it may admit of some doubt and argument whether they are equal or no.

Therefore we cannot fall into any mistake of doctrine, when we read in Scripture, that the Father, the Son, and Spirit are one, if we suppose it to signify, or at least to include, they are one in divine nature, or godhead; they are properly one and the same God; as when Christ expresses himself thus, John x. 30, *I and my Father are one;* and when the apostle John, speaking of the holy Trinity, saith, 1 John v. 7, *For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: And these three are one.*

Whatsoever other sense may possibly be put on the first of these texts, *I and my Father are one,* since Christ had not in that day so fully revealed his own godhead; yet it is evident, that this last expression, of the *Three that bear record in heaven,* cannot signify these three are one in their testimony; or, one in design and agreement, as some would have it: Because when the apostle, in the following verse, speaks of the agreement of the "three witnesses on earth," *the Spirit, the water, and the blood,* he asserts expressly these three, εἰς τὸ ἓν εἰσι, *agree in one* thing. But in this verse he says concerning the "Father, the Word, and the Spirit," they *are one,* ἓν εἰσι, which must mean that the three witnesses in heaven have some superior and more intimate union or oneness, than the three witnesses on earth pretended to: And what can this more justly be applied to, than a oneness in the divine nature?

This last text hath been the subject of many cavils and disputes, whether it were written originally by the apostle, or whether it were not foisted into the Scripture in some later ages; but upon the best examination we can make, I think there are good reasons to approve it apostolical.

Now since there is but one only true and living God, these three, or each of them, may be called "the only true and living God:" And wheresoever any such expression is found in Scripture, attributing the only true godhead to one of these, it is not to be supposed that it excludes the other two from communion in the only true godhead; but rather to shew that there is no other true godhead, but what belongs to these.

In this sense we must understand the following texts, where the one God is mentioned, if we would interpret them in a consistency with those numerous Scriptures before cited, where the one true godhead is attributed to the Son and Holy Spirit: Matt. xix. 17, *Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is God:* Mark xii. 32, *There is one God, and there is none other but he;* and many other places.

There are some texts wherein the Father is represented as the only true God: John xvii. 3, *That they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.* Rom. xvi. 27, *To God only wise,* or, to the only wise God, *be glory, through Jesus Christ, for ever.* 1 Cor. viii. 6, *To us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him,* Ephes. iv. 4, 5, 6, *There is—one Spirit—one Lord—one God and Father of all, who is above all.*

There are also some texts, wherein our Lord Jesus Christ may seem to be represented as the only true God: Isaiah xlv. 21, 22, *There is no God else besides me, a just God, and a Saviour; there is none beside me. Look unto me, and be ye saved all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else.* Jude verse 25, *To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty.* And some learned writers suppose, that whole title in the fourth verse of this Epistle belongs to Christ, where men are said to deny *the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ*, and they translate it thus agreeably enough to the greek, "our only Master, God, and Lord, Jesus Christ," Τὸν μόνον Δεσπότην, Θεὸν, καὶ κύριον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν. Especially when St. Peter's Second Epistle, of which St. Jude's Epistle is but a sort of epitome, applies the same word Δεσποτης to Christ; 2 *Peter* ii. 1.

Now in any of these Scriptures, we are not to imagine that either the Father or the Son are excluded, or shut out from true godhead; but that in some of them the only true godhead is represented in the person of the Father; in the others, the same godhead is represented in the person of the Son; for this only true godhead subsists and acts in three different persons, as we shall see in the following propositions.*

* Here it may not be amiss to mention that which some divines have laid a great stress upon, to prove the doctrine of the Trinity, *viz.* That God the Father, when he was about to create man, speaks thus, Gen. i. 26, *Let us make man in our image, after our likeness;* consulting, as it were, with the Son and Spirit. This seems very probable: And perhaps it may be upon this account, that the hebrew word is used in the plural number in the following texts: Eccles. xii. 1, *Remember thy* Creators *in the days of thy youth.* Psalm cxlix. 2, *Let Israel rejoice in his* Makers. Job xxxv. 10, *None saith, Where is God my* Makers? Isaiah liv. 5, *Thy* Makers *is thy husband.* Though other critics conceive these plural words to be mere expressions of eminence concerning God in the hebrew language, as Abraham is called *masters*, and Pharaoh, *Lords;* Gen. xxiv. and xl. 1; and as the hebrew word for God is אלהים *Elohim*, which signifies *Gods*, and is used for a false god or an angel, as well as for the true God.

There are also some other expressions in Scripture, where the Father, Son, and Spirit, seem as plainly to be denoted: Gen. iii. 22, *The Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of* US, *to know good and evil.* And *Isaiah* vi. 8, When the Father, Son, and Spirit, are represented in vision, the prophet *heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for* US? That is, *I* as one God, and *us* as three persons.

Since this was in the press, there has appeared a small discourse, called *The Trinity of the Bible*, wherein the argument arising from these hebrew plurals, and from the name *Elohim*, is shewn in its fullest force, and pushed to the utmost; and that with great probability, if the author had but answered the objections he himself has raised in the margin, pages 9 and 10, to the fuller satisfaction of his readers.

PROPOSITION XII.

THOUGH THE FATHER, SON, AND SPIRIT, ARE BUT ONE GOD, YET THERE ARE SUCH DIFFERENT PROPERTIES, ACTIONS, CHARACTERS, AND CIRCUMSTANCES ASCRIBED TO THESE THREE, AS ARE USUALLY ASCRIBED TO THREE DISTINCT PERSONS AMONGST MEN.

To make this proposition evident, I shall do two things. First, I will attempt to prove that they have personal actions and characters ascribed to them in Scripture: And then, secondly, shew that these actions require distinct persons.

First. "The sacred Three have personal actions and characters ascribed to them."

That God the Father is a person, all parties easily allow. The actions of creating and governing all things, purposing ends and using means, and disposing the creatures according to the rules of his wisdom, justice, and grace, are abundant evidences of his personality, and the Scripture is full of them.

The Son of God, even before he came into this world, did converse with the ancient patriarchs, was sent of God as the angel of his presence, to lead the Israelites in the wilderness, to encourage Joshua as captain of Jehovah's host, and then to take flesh upon him of the virgin Mary; all which are personal actions.

The Holy Spirit did lead Israel through the desert, did inspire the prophets, and speak by them, did guide and influence our Lord Jesus Christ, did work miracles by the apostles, &c. And all these are personal actions.

Now lest any opposer should say, "All these several actions are performed by one single person, even the great God himself, under mere different names or appearances, and not by three distinct personal agents," I shall therefore prove,

In the *second* place, That "actions which require distinct persons, are ascribed to the sacred Three in Scripture."

Now those are certainly such distinct personal actions and characters as require three distinct personal agents, which cannot be ascribed or attributed to each other. And there are such different and distinct personal characters and actions ascribed to each of these three in the word of God, as cannot possibly be ascribed to either of the other two. There are such things attributed to the Father, which cannot be attributed to the Son, or the Holy Spirit: And again, there are such things attributed to the Son, as cannot belong to the Father nor the Spirit: And such things are attributed to the Spirit, which cannot be ascribed either to the Father or the Son: Of which I shall produce a few instances.

The Father is said to generate, or beget the Son, Psalm ii. 7, *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee;* which is applied to Christ, *Heb.* i. 5, and *chapter* v. 5. Now this paternal act, whatsoever it mean, yet it cannot be attributed either to the Son or the Spirit.

The Son is called *the only begotten of the Father*, John i. 14, 18; which filial character cannot be ascribed to the Spirit or the Father.

The Spirit is said to be given by the Father to the Son: John iii. 34, *God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him;* and Isaiah lxi. 1, *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,*

because the Lord hath anointed me; which is applied to Christ, *Luke* iv. 18. But what is said here of the Spirit, cannot be attributed to the Father nor the Son.

" The Father sent the Son into the world to take flesh upon him, and to be born, or made, of a woman;" *John* vi. 38, 39, 40, 57. *Gal.* iv. 4. But neither the Father nor the Spirit are ever said to be sent to take upon them our nature, or the likeness of sinful flesh, as is expressed concerning the Son, *Rom.* viii. 3.

The Holy Spirit is said to be sent from the Father, by our Lord Jesus Christ, unto the disciples: John xv. 26, *When the Comforter is come, whom I will send to you from the Father.* And Acts ii. 33, the Son *having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed* him *forth,* in his various gifts upon the apostles.

The diversity of characters and offices which are sustained and fulfilled by the Father, Son, and Spirit, in order to the salvation of sinners, are so many distinct personal titles, properties, and actions attributed to them, whereby they are plainly distinguished from one another, as three personal agents.

The Father sustains the character of the supreme Lord and Governor of all things, in the economy of our salvation. He is represented in Scripture as maintaining the rights of godhead, and demanding satisfaction for the affronts that are done thereto by our sins: He purposes and appoints the scheme of our salvation in himself, *Ephes.* i. 9. He sends his own Son *in the likeness of sinful flesh,* to make satisfaction to his injured authority, and to the offended dignity of godhead.

The Son took flesh and blood, to do the will of the Father. Heb. x. 5, 7, *A body hast thou prepared me:—And lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God.* It is the Son who dies to make atonement for sin, who rises again, and ascends to heaven as our High-Priest, there to intercede for us; and is exalted by the Father to the kingdom, in order to govern the world and the church.

The Holy Spirit, in the sacred economy of our salvation, is sent from the Father by the Son, to lead sinners into the knowledge of the truth, to change their natures, to sanctify or make them holy, to comfort and conduct them to glory, as well as to work miracles in the world, for the confirmation of this gospel.

Now all these are so many several offices, characters, and actions, which cannot be promiscuously applied to one another, in the same manner as they are attributed distinctly to each of the sacred Three in Scripture; and therefore they must be accounted distinct personal actions, &c.

I know not how it is possible for any one to read these following texts of Scripture, wherein all the blessed Three are mentioned together, without supposing them to be three distinct personal agents.

Isaiah xlii. 1, where God the Father says, *Behold my servant, whom I uphold,—I have put my Spirit upon him.* Chap. lxi. 1, where the Son of God in prophecy says, *The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me.*

Luke iii. 22, *And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape, like a dove upon him,* (that is Christ) *and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son, in thee I am well pleased.* Here are the three persons of the blessed Trinity, manifesting themselves in a sensible manner at the baptism of Christ. The Son like a man, the Holy Spirit as a dove, and the Father speaking from heaven.

Matt. xxviii. 19, *Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.*

John xiv. 16, 17, *And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter—even the Spirit of truth.* Verse 26, *The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.* The little word HE in the Greek is ἐκεῖνος, which is always used for a person. Chap. xv. 26, *I will send unto you, from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify,* or bear witness, *of me;* where this personal word ἐκεῖνος, is again used.

Rom. viii. 11, *The Spirit of him* (that is, the Father) *who raised up Jesus from the dead.* Chap. xv. 30, *I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me, in your prayers to God for me.*

2 Cor. xiii. 14, *The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen.*

Ephes. ii. 18, *Through him* (that is, Christ) *we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.* Chap. iv. 4, 5, 6, *There is one Spirit—one Lord—one God and Father of all.*

1 Peter i. 2, *Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.*

Jude verses 20, 21, *Praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.*

I think the plain and express Scripture contained in these citations, sufficiently distinguishes three personal agents, without any further comment upon them. A Turk, or an Indian, that reads them without any prepossession, would certainly understand most of them so.

PROPOSITION XIII.

THEREFORE IT HAS BEEN THE CUSTOM OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH IN ALMOST ALL AGES, TO USE THE WORD "PERSON," IN ORDER TO DESCRIBE THESE THREE DISTINCTIONS OF FATHER, SON, AND SPIRIT; AND TO CALL THEM THREE DISTINCT PERSONS.

THE word *person* signifies, in the common language of mankind, one single intelligent voluntary agent, or a principle of action that has understanding and will. So three men, or three angels, are properly called three distinct persons; and the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, who are all one God, yet having three such distinct sort of actions and characters attributed to them, as may properly be ascribed to three distinct intelligent agents, we make no scruple to call them three persons. For it is sufficiently evident, that three mere names, three attributes, three modes or manners of being, three relations, or three sorts of conception of one and the same single or individual being, are not sufficient to sustain the three different offices, or to perform the three different sorts of actions, which are attributed to Father, Son, and Spirit: Nor can we account for them, without supposing three distinct intelligent agents.

It might be also mentioned, to confirm this proposition, that the Scripture itself uses the word *person,* in one or more places, to distinguish the Father from the Son. *Heb.* i. 3, Christ is called *the express image of his Father's person.* And though the greek word *hypostasis,* which we well render *person,* sometimes signifies *substance,* as it is translated *Heb.* xi. 1; yet, in that very place, the word seems to intimate a distinction

from the Father, strong enough to answer the word *person* in our language. Again, in 2 *Cor.* iv. 6, " the knowledge of the glory of God shines forth in the person of Jesus Christ; which perhaps is a better translation of the Greek word προσωπον, *prosopon*, than when we render it " the face of Christ."

Though the word *person* be fitly used and applied in this case, yet we generally suppose it is not to be taken exactly in the same sense, as when we apply the word to three men, or three angels, and call them three distinct persons; for they have not such real communion in one nature, as these three sacred persons have in one godhead.

But since these things are so difficult to determine, I will never contend with my brother, or fellow-christian, who scruples to use the word *person* in this doctrine; provided he will but allow such a distinction between the sacred Three, as is sufficient to support their distinct characters and offices assigned to them in Scripture: And this is al that I mean by using this word.

Yet since the word *person* is the best word that we know, and comes nearest to the ideas or conceptions, which the Scripture seems to give us of the distinction between Father, Son, and Spirit; I use it still with great freedom and satisfaction, in a sense near akin to the common sense of the word.

A MORAL ARGUMENT.

As I have used one moral argument at the end of the Tenth Proposition, to prove the true and proper deity of Father, Son, and Spirit; so I shall propose another of the same kind under this Proposition, to confirm both the doctrine of their deity and distinct personality together: And it is this:

This great article of belief, that " Father, Son, and Spirit are three persons, and yet one God," is so sublime in its nature, so impossible to be found out by human reason if it had not been revealed; it carries in it such an appearance of contradiction at first; it is so exceeding hard to explain and reconcile, even when it is well considered by us; and it is so shocking and offensive, in the most usual explications of it, to the great pretenders to reason, that it can hardly be supposed how it should enter into the minds of men at first; and how it should have been so generally believed in the Christian church in almost all ages of Christianity, if it had not been very plainly revealed, and strongly confirmed in Scripture, so that those honest and conscientious men could not wink against the light and strength of evidence, nor turn the Scripture to any other sense.

It is not to be imagined that such a doctrine of the Trinity, which has no countenance from the light of nature, nor any manner of allurement in it to gratify the lusts or fancies of men, nor flatter the pride of human reason, should ever have come, without most forcible evidence, into the heads of such multitudes of great and wise men, who thought and searched with freedom for themselves, and who read the Bible with an honest inquiry after truth: I say, it is not to be imagined that such a strange article should ever have been believed by these men, and brought into the church, or subsisted there so many hundred years, and especially since the reformation, were it not for the plain, strong, overbearing light, and resistless proofs of it that are found in the word of God.*

* How the particular explications of this doctrine came to be so various, both in the writings of the primitive and modern Christians, will be easily accounted for in the following proposition, *viz.* " Because Scripture has not clearly

Several remarks with which the reverend ministers of London have prefaced their late *Harmony of Confessions* on this article, are well worth notice here. See pages 41—47.

PROPOSITION XIV.

THOUGH THE SACRED THREE ARE EVIDENTLY AND PLAINLY DISCOVERED IN SCRIPTURE TO BE ONE AND THE SAME GOD, AND THREE DISTINCT PERSONAL AGENTS, OR PERSONS, YET THE SCRIPTURE HATH NOT IN PLAIN AND EVIDENT LANGUAGE EXPLAINED AND PRECISELY DETERMINED THE PARTICULAR WAY AND MANNER, HOW THESE THREE PERSONS ARE ONE GOD, OR HOW THIS ONE GODHEAD IS IN THREE PERSONS.

THE truth of this doctrine, that "there are three divine persons and one God," is abundantly more evident in the Scripture, than any particular explication of this sacred doctrine: And though learned men have endeavoured to explain the Trinity by reason, to determine the *modus*, or manner, how three are one, and one three, to defend their schemes by human arguments, and to illustrate them by several similitudes, yet these illustrations, these explainings and reasonings, with the human terms that belong to them, are not to be esteemed, as they have too often been, the matter of divine revelation, any farther than they are by evident and irresistible consequence drawn from the word of God.

Among these explications, some of them seem to me to be evidently false and insufficient.

Such is the arian scheme, which supposes the Father only to be the true God, and that the two other persons have not true, proper, and eternal godhead belonging to them: And such is the sabellian scheme, which supposes the Father, Son, and Spirit, not to be distinct persons, but mere different names, modes, and appearances of the one God. One of these denies the true godhead, the other the personality.

Other schemes have been multiplied in the christian world, which do indeed secure and maintain the substance of the scriptural doctrine of the Trinity, as the athanasian, the scholastic scheme, &c. Yet they have such various difficulties attending them, that I do not think it necessary to trouble the private Christian with a long detail of them here.

And indeed, to speak my own sentiments freely, I must say, that upon a fresh and unbiassed search of matters, a mature and deliberate review of the scriptural doctrine of the Trinity, as I find it in the Bible, and a new survey of the several schemes found out to explain it, I am more firmly established than ever in this doctrine, that Father, Son, and Spirit, are the one true God, yet subsisting in three persons: But as to the various schemes of explication, there is not any of them can prevail upon me any farther now, than to receive them as possible or probable explications of a very deep and difficult doctrine of Scripture.

explained it." And if the bulk of the christian world has at any time for some ages together followed one and the same scheme of explication, it is because they found undeniably the plain doctrine of three persons and one God revealed in Scripture, and they knew no other way to give a tolerable explication of it all that time.

But suppose the professors of any of the best of these schemes should find sufficient arguments from the word of God, to demonstrate the truth of their own scheme, and could prove it beyond all contradiction, that their particular explication of the Trinity is the very doctrine that is revealed in the holy Scripture, yet I am sure they can never prove that it is clearly and plainly revealed there. But it still requires much skill and labour of reasoning to draw it out from Scripture, and set it in an evident light.

PROPOSITION XV.

THENCE I INFER, THAT IT CAN NEVER BE NECESSARY TO SALVATION, TO KNOW THE PRECISE WAY AND MANNER HOW ONE GODHEAD SUBSISTS IN THREE PERSONAL AGENTS, OR HOW THESE THREE PERSONS ARE ONE GOD.

THE reasons of this proposition are very evident:

1. Though the doctrine of the Trinity seems to be a fundamental article of Christianity, yet the particular explication of this sacred doctrine, as we have hinted before, cannot be a fundamental, because "it is not any where revealed to us in Scripture, in so plain and manifest language as the fundamental articles of our religion are and must be:" For the Scriptures were written to make the meanest of men wise to salvation; even the babes in Christ, and the weak, and the unlearned, the "base and the foolish things of this world, whom God hath chosen and called;" 1 *Cor.* i. 27. Now that it is not so plainly revealed, appears, because learned and pious men, who have made an honest search after truth, derive their several explications of this doctrine by long and difficult trains of reasoning, and are often ready to commit mistakes, and to run counter to the most established principles of natural reason, and sometimes contradict themselves too in this work.

I will not deny but there may be several truths, both of natural and revealed religion, that are merely drawn by reasoning and consequence, which may yet be necessary to salvation: But then these are such as are open and obvious to the first view of reason, and such as lie very near the surface of Scripture, if I may so express it, and may be inferred with the greatest ease by men of the lowest rank of understanding. Such easy and obvious consequences may contain fundamental doctrines. But whatsoever lies hidden deep in the sacred mines of the word of God, and must be digged thence with much learning and study, much toil and labour of reasoning, and can be drawn out only by long chains of laborious argument; these things can never be designed of God for the fundamental articles of our religion, nor ought they to be esteemed or imposed as such by weak and fallible men.

2. A second reason I have to persuade me, that no particular explication of the Trinity, and the *modus* of it, is necessary and fundamental, is this: That there have been many, and very different explications of this doctrine embraced by some persons of most exemplary piety: Such persons as have most firmly believed the general doctrine itself, and such, concerning whom I could even venture to say, "May my soul be where theirs is in the other world!"

Some have asserted one substance, one conscious mind, inconceivably and necessarily distinguished into three personal agents. Others have supposed three distinct sub-

stances or minds, and yet all intimately, and essentially, and necessarily united in one godhead.

Some have maintained the sonship of Christ, and procession of the Spirit, to be essentially and eternally necessary to the divine nature. Others would account for the generation and procession, and every thing that looks like derivation, some other way, rather than let it belong to godhead.

And yet the writings and conversation of all of them have been famous for a savour of piety; they have all paid divine honours to Father, Son, and Spirit, and lived and died to the glory of God their Saviour: Some of them were certainly mistaken on earth, in their particular explications of this mystery, because they differed so widely; and they were taken to heaven before they could agree in this point of controversy; thence it plainly follows, that an agreement and certainty in this point is not necessary in our way to heaven.

3. Another argument I would use to prove, that the particular explications of this doctrine of the Trinity cannot be necessary to salvation, is this, that the "duties which we are obliged to pay to the Father, Son, and Spirit, in order to our own salvation, do not depend upon any particular modes of explication," in what manner they are one, and in what manner they are three; but upon their divine all-sufficiency to fulfil and sustain their several offices and characters, that are attributed to them in the word of God. But this I shall enlarge upon more in some following Propositions.

I shall conclude this head, with calling in the testimony of some authors to support this proposition, whose zeal for the sacred doctrine of the Trinity can never be called in question.

The first is the reverend, learned, and pious Doctor Owen, to whose name and memory I pay as great veneration as to most of the writers of the last age. In his little *Treatise of the Doctrine of the Trinity*, third edition, 8vo. p. 18, he hath these words: "The sum of this revelation in this matter, is, that God is one; that this one God is Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; that the Father is the Father of the Son; and the Son the Son of the Father; and the Holy Ghost the Spirit of the Father and the Son; and that in respect of this their mutual relation, they are distinct from each other. This is the substance of the doctrine of the Trinity, as to the first direct concernment of faith therein." And a little after, "This is the whole of faith's concernment in this matter, as it respects the direct revelation of God made by himself in the Scripture, and the first proper general end thereof. Let this be clearly confirmed by direct and positive divine testimonies, containing the declaration and revelation of God concerning himself, and faith is secured as to all its concerns. For it hath both its proper formal object, and is sufficiently enabled to be directive of divine worship and obedience. The explication of this doctrine unto edification, suitable unto the revelation mentioned, is of another consideration."

And page 75, when he has finished his proofs of the godhead and personality of the sacred Three, he sums up all in these words, *viz.* "Our conclusion from the whole is, That there is nothing more fully expressed in the Scripture, than this sacred truth is; that there is one God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; which are divine, distinct, intelligent, voluntary, omnipotent principles of operation and working, which whosoever thinks himself obliged to believe the Scripture, must believe; and concerning others, in this

discourse, we are not solicitous. This is that which was first proposed; namely, to manifest what is expressly revealed in the Scripture, concerning God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; so as that we may duly believe in him, yield obedience unto him, enjoy communion with him, walk in his love and fear, and so come at length to be blessed with him for evermore. Nor doth faith for its security, establishment, and direction, absolutely stand in need of any farther exposition or explanation of these things."

And after the author has given a brief explication of essence, substance, unity, distinction, personality, &c. in a few pages he adds, page 79, " Nor are those brief explications themselves before-mentioned, so proposed as to be placed immediately in the same rank and order with the original revelations before insisted on, but only are pressed as proper expressions of what is revealed, to increase our light and further our edification."

The next authors I shall cite on this subject, are the " four London ministers, who stated and defended the doctrine of the blessed Trinity," in a book lately published by their concurrent labours, and who are persons of undoubted piety and zeal for the christian faith.

In page 18, their words are these: " Section 6. We do not ourselves pretend to say, how these three are distinguished from each other: That we leave to those, who are bold enough to speak, even upon such a point as this, without, if not against what the Scriptures themselves any where have said: We only say, that there they are distinguished."

" Section 7. We farther add, that though these three are in the Scriptures distinguished from, and therefore not to be confounded with each other; yet we have learned nothing there, either of their being compounded, or divided: Nor do we therefore undertake to shew explicitly, and in particulars, how they are three; nor how, though three, yet they are one. What we assert again is only, that they are three, some way or other; and though in some respect three, yet but one God."

" Section 8. Nay, though these three are in the holy Scriptures spoken of under the names of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; and as begetting, begotten, and proceeding: Yet still we leave it to those who are wiser, or at least more daring and bold than we, to say that this does, and to shew afterward how it does, relate to the divine essence.* For we, who have no notion of a greater or lesser in the godhead, do think, that wherever that does belong, it must equally belong: And consequently, that it is not any one of the three, that is, exclusive of the others, but that these three are the one supreme God."

" Section 9. Let it be added, before we produce our proofs, that these three are not merely three names: And that these three names do not every where in Scripture, if they do any where, bear one and the same meaning."

* Though these authors agree entirely with Doctor Owen, in not making the knowledge of any particular explication of the doctrine of the Trinity necessary to salvation, yet they differ in this; that Doctor Owen, in several parts of his Treatise, supposes the vulgar explication of Father, Son, and Spirit, as three eternal, necessary, personal, differences in the very essence of God, to be a certain and unavoidable consequence of the doctrine itself: But the writer of these sections is not certain, that these differences of Father, Son, Spirit, generation, procession, &c. do relate to the divine essence itself; and in this point I ask leave to differ from that great man Doctor Owen, and join with these later writers; for, in maturer years, I am not ashamed to profess my ignorance in a subject so sublime, and to abate some degrees of my younger confidence as to the modes of explaining this mystery.

"Section 10. We shall now only venture to say, once more, that whatever the distinction is between these sacred Three, or wherein soever it does consist; as on one part it does not destroy the unity of the divine nature, so on the other, it is such, so real, and so great, as is just and sufficient ground to support whatever is distinctly said of the one or the other of them in the holy Scriptures. So as that the person of the Father is not the Son; nor the Son, the Father; nor either of these the Holy Ghost. Thus far the serious plain Christian may venture into this awful mystery of the blessed Trinity."

But as these reverend authors, in the following words, do not by any means advise the unlearned and private Christian to search further, so I cannot see any great necessity that he should.

PROPOSITION XVI.

YET IT IS OUR DUTY TO BELIEVE THE GENERAL DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY, VIZ. THAT THESE THREE PERSONAL AGENTS, FATHER, SON, AND SPIRIT, HAVE REAL COMMUNION IN ONE GODHEAD, ALTHOUGH WE CANNOT FIND OUT THE PRECISE WAY AND MANNER OF EXPLAINING IT.

I WOULD have it observed here, that I do not absolutely determine the sacred doctrine of the Trinity to be incapable of all explication: For though many past attempts may have been weak and insufficient, yet it does not follow that all future attempts shall be so too. Who can assure us that God will never give to any favourite Christian the happy turn of thought, that may lead him, as by an easy clew, into the knowledge of this mystery? Daniel foretels, that towards the latter end of the world, *many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased;* Dan. xii. 4. By a mutual commerce of the sentiments of men of learning and piety, and by the assistance of the divine Spirit, there may be some glorious spark of light cast upon this obscure article of faith, which former ages despaired of: Even as the great Sir Isaac Newton in our age has traced the nature, bulk, and motions of the heavenly bodies, beyond what all former ages knew, or what men on earth could ever have hoped for.

But suppose this sacred doctrine, as to the manner of it, could never be explained by us, or to us in this present mortal state, yet all the cavils of our adversaries hitherto have never been able to prove, that this doctrine itself, free from all human additions and incumbrances, is really impossible; and therefore we are bound to believe this article, so far as God has plainly and evidently revealed it, though it should be to us inexplicable.

There is, I confess, a certain pride in the mind of man, that is ready to resist divine truth, if it does not lie level to our understanding, submit to our reasonings, and come within the compass of our clear and comprehensive ideas. It was this criminal pride, that has tempted some of the socinian writers to say, that if the doctrines of the divinity and satisfaction of Christ were never so plainly expressed in Scripture, yet they would not assent to them in the literal sense, because they could not understand them, or because, acccording to the judgment of their reason, it could not be approved. Therefore they are wont to twist and turn the plain expressions of Scripture by the arts of criticism and metaphor, to signify something else. Socinus himself says, that in such

cases, " any the greatest force is to be used with words rather than take them in the obvious sense." *Epistola Secunda ad Balcerim.*

But surely it must be acknowledged that in the nature, works, and ways of God, there are many things which are above the reach of our present understandings; many things which are true, and yet we know not how to reconcile them to one another. And whatsoever doctrines of this kind God shall plainly reveal to us in his word, we are bound, under the penalty of his high displeasure, to receive and believe, though we cannot reconcile them.

But some will object and say, " Must we believe things that are inconsistent, and assent to contradictions?"

Answer. There is a great deal of difference between a seeming and a real contradiction. If we can suppose, that it could ever have been said in Scripture, that three gods are one god, or three persons are one person, there had been reason indeed to disbelieve it in the literal sense, and to have found out some more consistent interpretation of it, according to the rules of speech: For neither reason nor religion can require us to believe plain inconsistencies.

But when we assert that Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, are three distinct agents in our salvation, such as we usually call *persons:* And when we again assert that " the Father is God, the Son is God, the Spirit is God, and yet that there are not three Gods but one God;" there is no real contradiction in all these, though we could not find the plain and certain way to reconcile them: And since these propositions are of such importance in our religion, since the sense of them is evidently contained in Scripture, though not the express words; since they seem to lie plain and open to the view of any common reader, that has never been prepossessed with other notions, I think we may venture to say, God requires the belief of them where the Bible is known and read.

Here some persons will be ready to say, " We cannot find these doctrines in the Bible, we cannot see them written there with sufficient evidence, and therefore we believe them not; nor can we be required to believe what we cannot see revealed."

But these objectors would do well to ask themselves solemnly, as in the sight of God, " Whether or no they should not think them plainly and sufficiently revealed, if they could but reconcile them by reason to their own satisfaction?" If so, then it is plain, that the impediment of belief does not lie in the want of evidence, but in faulty prejudices and reluctance of the mind, because of the inability of our reason to comprehend what is revealed. We are not willing to see these truths, because difficulty and mystery attend them; and it is exceeding natural and easy to wink a little, when we are not willing to see.

Now if these secret prejudices are indulged, if we will not submit to receive these sacred truths, merely because we cannot comprehend and reconcile them, we have some ground to suspect ourselves guilty of that inward pride and obstinacy of mind, which are highly criminal in the sight of God. And whether the great God will not terribly resent, in the other world, these faulty prejudices, this haughtiness of the mind, this unbelief of truths so plainly revealed, is a thought that should make us tremble, and render us exceeding cautious, and meek, and humble in all our conduct about these important doctrines of religion.

I must confess for myself, with honest freedom, that in my diligent search after truth in the Bible, I would have been glad to have taken up with some ideas of the Trinity,

that might have been less subject to the cavils of human reason, and more easily comprehended and reconciled, if the plain and obvious sense of Scripture, in a multitude of places, had not constrained my faith to submit to divine revelation, and to acquiesce in this great truth, that "Father, Son, and Spirit, are three persons, and yet but one God."

I might here add another reason also, why we ought to believe, that these three persons have some real and intimate communion in the godhead, *viz.* because the characters and offices they sustain in the matter of our salvation, and the duties which we owe them, do in my judgment require the perfections of a God, that they may be fit to fulfil those offices, and to receive the homage of those duties. There appears to be a necessity of omnipotence and omniscience, and of other divine attributes, to execute those glorious works, which are assigned to the Son and the Holy Spirit, in the word of God, as well as those which are ascribed to the Father. Nor do I know how we can justly pay them honours answerable to these characters, if we believe them to be mere creatures.

PROPOSITION XVII.

AND WHERESOEVER WE MEET WITH ANY THING IN SCRIPTURE, THAT IS INCOMMUNICABLY DIVINE, ASCRIBED TO EITHER OF THESE THREE PERSONS, WE MAY VENTURE TO TAKE IT IN THE PLAIN AND OBVIOUS SENSE OF THE WORDS, SINCE WE BELIEVE THE TRUE AND ETERNAL GODHEAD TO BELONG TO THEM ALL.

IT has been hinted before, that there is a great deal of reason to suppose, that the arians and the socinians, and all others who deny the proper godhead of the Son and Spirit, are guilty of a gross mistake; because there are so many places of Scripture which they are forced to handle with much art and criticism, and to twist, and to strain, and to pervert them from their plain and native sense, before they can make them consist with the arian or socinian doctrines. But the Christian who believes that the Son and Spirit have proper communion in the godhead, reads with pleasure all those expressions of Scripture, which ascribe divine titles and dignity both to the Spirit and the Son, as well as the Father, and understands and believes them in the plain sense of the words, with much satisfaction and ease, and lets his faith rest upon the express revelation of God in his word.

All that is incommunicably divine, and that is attributed to the Son or Spirit in Scripture, is naturally and easily applied or imputed to the same godhead or divine nature, which belongs both to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, or in which the Son and Spirit have communion together with the Father.

PROPOSITION XVIII.

WHERE ANY THING INFERIOR TO THE DIGNITY OF GODHEAD IS REALLY AND PROPERLY ATTRIBUTED IN SCRIPTURE TO THE PERSON OF THE SON, OR THE HOLY SPIRIT, IT MAY BE EASILY IMPUTED TO SOME INFERIOR NATURE UNITED TO THE GODHEAD IN THAT PERSON, OR TO SOME INFERIOR CHARACTER OR OFFICE SUSTAINED BY THAT PERSON.

HERE let it be observed, that there are some inferior properties and actions in Scripture

ascribed to God in general, and to the person of the Father, as well as to the Son and Spirit, which are not to be taken properly, but merely in a figurative sense, such as to have eyes and ears, hands and feet, to rejoice, to grieve, to repent, &c.; which signify the pure actions of God as an infinite Spirit, expressed towards his creatures in a figurative and familiar way, and in likeness to man, that we may understand them the better. These are not the inferior expressions which I speak of. But when any thing inferior to the dignity of godhead is in a real and proper manner attributed to the Son, or the Spirit; then it is to be explained in one of these two ways which this proposition describes.

The reason of this proposition is evident; because since the Son and the Holy Spirit are truly and properly partakers of godhead or the divine nature, therefore nothing that is inferior to the nature of God, can be asserted concerning them, considered absolutely and simply as partakers in the divine essence. Whatsoever therefore is properly ascribed to any of these sacred persons, that is beneath the dignity of godhead, must arise from something external to God, something that is not essential to the divine nature.

Now this something external to God is either real or relative. If it be real, it must be some inferior nature united to the godhead. If it be relative, it must be some inferior character or office sustained by one of the sacred persons: And upon either of these accounts, we may suppose something inferior to the supreme dignity of godhead, to be ascribed to one or more of the sacred Three.

Let us inquire particularly concerning this.

There are many things inferior to the dignity of godhead, which are evidently attributed to the Son in Scripture; such as these, that he was *made of a woman*, Gal. iv. 4; that he was in the *form of a servant*, Philip. ii. 7; that he *increased in wisdom and stature*, Luke ii. 52; that he "knew not the day of judgment," *Mark* xiii. 32; that he was hungry and thirsty, and asleep, that he wept, that he groaned, that he was forsaken of his Father, that his soul was exceeding sorrowful, that he was crucified and died, that he rose again, and ascended to heaven.

But all these things are easily accounted for, by the union of the godhead to the inferior nature of man, in the person of Jesus Christ. For he who was born of the virgin was *Immanuel, or God with us*, Matt. i. 23. He who was true and real God, was also true and real man, and *of the seed of David according to the flesh;* Rom. i. 3. He who was God over all, blessed for ever, according to his divine nature, "came from the jewish fathers according to the flesh, or his human nature," *Rom.* ix. 5. He who was the true God was *manifested in the flesh;* 1 Tim. iii. 16. This is called the "incarnation of Christ," and the New Testament is full of it.

Hence it comes to pass, that the properties and actions of one nature are ascribed sometimes to the whole person, and sometimes to the other nature. So *the Son of man* is said to be in *heaven*, John iii. 13, and that while the man Jesus was here upon earth; because, as God, he was in heaven and earth, and every where present. So the *Lord of glory* is said to be *crucified*, 1 Cor. ii. 8, because the man Christ Jesus was crucified, who in his divine nature is the Lord of glory. So the church is said to be "purchased with God's own blood," *Acts* xx. 28, because the blood of the Man who was also God purchased the church. So *God laid down his life for us*, 1 John iii. 16, that is, he who was God laid down his human life. This is what divines usually call a communication of properties.

If there be any thing inferior to the dignity of godhead attributed to the Son or Spirit, which cannot be imputed to some real inferior nature, united to the godhead in that person, then it arises from something relative, and it must be attributed to some inferior character or office, sustained by that person in the economy of our salvation.

Now there are some things that seem inferior to the dignity of godhead, which are attributed to the Son, even before his coming in the flesh, and being born of a virgin; as, that "God the Father SENT his Son into the world," which seems to imply his being before. That he "came down from heaven, not to do his own will, but the will of him that SENT him;" *John* vi. 38, 39. *Gal.* iv. 4. That he left the "glory which he had with the Father before the beginning of the world;" *John* xvii. 5. That God the Father "prepared a body for him;" *Heb.* x. 5. The Son came and assumed that body "to do the will of God on earth;" *verses* 7, 9, compared with *Psalm* xl. 6, 7, 8, as he had been God's angel or messenger to the patriarchs.

Now if we can give ourselves leave to suppose, that the human soul of our Lord Jesus Christ had a being, and was personally united to the divine nature, long before his body was born of the virgin, even from the very foundation of the world, and that this was the Angel who conversed with Abraham, Moses, Joshua, &c. then we may most easily account for these expressions of Scripture, which signify something inferior to godhead before his incarnation; and we may attribute them to the human soul of Christ; which, though infinitely inferior to God, yet doubtless is a spirit of a very excellent and noble nature, as being formed on purpose to be united to God, and never existed but in a personal union with God.

There is nothing in the whole word of God, that I know of, which discountenances such a supposition as this; and there are a great many texts, both of the Old and New Testament, which are with the greatest ease explained and reconciled this way, which it is very hard to account for, without admitting this opinion; nor has it the least ill aspect on any other article of our faith.*

But if we dare not venture our thoughts so far out of the common track, as to suppose that the human soul of Christ had any being before he took flesh, then we suppose that he existed only in his divine nature before his incarnation; and then these inferior expressions of being "God's messenger or angel," of having "a body prepared for him by the Father," of "being sent," of "coming to do the will of his Father," and of "not doing his own will," &c. must be attributed to his character and office as Mediator, which carries something inferior in it, and which he assumed even from the beginning of the world: So that the Son, who had all power and sovereignty as God, must be said, under the character of a mediator, to be the messenger, the servant of God the Father, and be sent by him to do his will.

* If any of my readers imagine, that either here, or in the end of this chapter, I have forgot the words of my title-page, and have used the aid of human schemes, I intreat them to remember, that I have built nothing at all toward the proof of the Trinity, upon any such supposition or scheme whatsoever; but have only proposed an illustration, a simile, a thought, or notion, whereby the divine doctrine may be more easily apprehended, or whereby many texts of Scripture may be more naturally explained, and more happily reconciled. Those who disapprove these hints, may entirely neglect them, and the plain scriptural doctrine of the Trinity abides the same still.

I do not mention this pre-existence of the human soul of Christ as a point of faith, which I firmly believe, but merely as a matter of opinion, not to be rashly rejected, and well worth our farther inquiry; for I have not met with any thing yet published against it, that is sufficient to forbid the proposal of it here; and perhaps I shall say much more for it, if I should live to publish some short dissertations that I have written relating to the doctrine of the Trinity.

And thus by considering our Lord Jesus Christ, either in his inferior nature, as having a human soul and a human body united to godhead, or in his inferior office as being a mediator, we may explain all those texts which ascribe something to him below the majesty of godhead. And where we cannot apply it to his human nature, it must be applied to his office.

I might multiply examples out of many parts of the New Testament and the Old, to shew with how much ease and readiness, this doctrine will assist us to explain and reconcile many things that are said concerning Christ; but I choose rather to exemplify this, in explaining those difficult expressions of our Lord Jesus Christ concerning himself, which are recorded in *John* v. 19—30, *Verily, I say unto you, the Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do; for what things soever he doeth, these also doth the Son likewise. The Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doth.—As the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom he will. For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son, that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father.—The dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live. For as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; and hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man.* And yet a little after, he saith again, *I can of my own self do nothing.*

Here are some divine characters, which seem to be too great for any mere creature; such as, " Whatsoever things the Father doth, these also doth the Son likewise. The Father sheweth the Son all things that himself doth. The Son raiseth the dead by his word, and quickeneth whom he will; all men must honour the Son, as they honour the Father. As the Father hath life in himself, so the Son hath life in himself."

Here are also some characters, that seem much inferior to the dignity of godhead: " The Son can do nothing of himself. Judgment is committed to him by the Father. He has it given to him, to have life in himself; and authority to execute judgment is given him :" And it is repeated again, " Of himself he can do nothing ;" *verse* 30.

Now may not these Scriptures admit of this exposition, imputing the inferior characters and expressions to his inferior or human nature, thus: Jesus is but a man, and can do nothing of himself; but because the man Jesus is the Son of man, or the appointed Messiah, as *verse* 27, therefore the Father has ordained, that he should be personally united to God; " it hath pleased the Father, that in him the fulness of godhead should dwell bodily;" thus the Son of man hath union with godhead given him: And by this means, he has it given him to have life in himself; for where godhead is, there also are the properties of godhead, one of which is, to have life in himself. By this means also the person of the Son, as God-man, is said to know all things that the Father does, and doth the same things which he seeth the Father do, or performs that which the Father hath purposed. So the Son raiseth the dead, quickeneth whom he will, and executeth judgment on all mankind, and receiveth divine honours, as well as the Father: And yet he is said to have all this power and honour given him by the Father, because by the appointment of the Father, the divine nature dwells in Jesus the Son of man, who of himself, and in himself is but a man, and could do nothing.

The Son, as he is man, is represented here as able to do nothing of himself: The Father, though he be God, is represented as willing to do nothing of himself: Therefore

the Father, whose divine nature dwells in the Son, doth all things by the Son, as his great agent and minister in the salvation of men.

Or if this interpretation does not please, we may then suppose that the inferior characters here mentioned are only attributed to Christ as Mediator; and then the interpretation is this, *viz.* Though, considered as God, he knows all things, he can do all things, and is the sovereign of life, yet considered as Mediator, he is supposed to wave this sovereignty; and in this sense he may be said to receive these powers, instructions, and delegated authority from the Father, who sustains the sovereign or supreme character in the economy of grace.

This shall suffice concerning the inferior actions and characters, which are ascribed to Christ in the Scripture.

I proceed now to consider the Holy Spirit.

There are also some things in Scripture, which seem inferior to the dignity of godhead, that are attributed to the blessed Spirit, as that he is "sent by the Father at the Son's request," *John* xiv. 16; that "he is sent by the Son," *John* xv. 26; that *he shall not speak of himself, but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak*, John xvi. 13; that "he shall receive the things of the Son, and shew them unto men," *verses* 14, 15; that the Holy Ghost was given to some men, by the laying on of the hands of other men, *Acts* viii. 17, 18; that the Spirit is "poured out upon men," *Acts* ii. 17, 18; that men are "baptized with the Holy Ghost," *Matt.* iii. 11; that he *maketh intercession for* the saints, *with groanings that cannot be uttered*, Rom. viii. 26, 27.

Now if there be no inferior nature, which belongs to the Spirit of God, to which these things may properly be ascribed, then they must be imputed to the Spirit of God, considered in the inferior character or office of a deputy or vicegerent, a messenger or advocate,* both of the Father and of the Son: And in this sense, he who, considered as true God, is one with the Father, and hath absolute sovereignty; yet, considered in the gospel as a prime minister of the Father's and Son's kingdom, is pleased to represent himself as being sent by the Father and the Son, as their chief agent, to fulfil many kind offices for us and in us, in the economy of salvation.

If I could make this proposition clearer, and give my reader an easier conception of it by any human illustrations, I would attempt it in this manner, and try to represent this divine mystery of three persons, with three distinct characters, yet but one God.

Suppose a king should send an ambassador extraordinary to a foreign country, and at his removal should appoint a resident to stay behind him in that country; and suppose the soul of the king himself could be so united also to the body, or person, both of the ambassador and the resident, as to animate, actuate, and move them, and become, as it were, one person with each of them: Then the soul of the king himself might be said to sustain both his own character as king, and the inferior characters both of the ambassador and the resident, and fulfil all those offices under a distinct sort of personality.

Thus we may apprehend how God the Father, the King of heaven, sent down his Son, a distinct person, in whom the same godhead dwells, as an ambassador extraordi-

* The word παράκλητος, *paracletos*, which we translate *the Comforter*, in the 14th, 15th, and 16th chapters of St. John, may be as properly rendered, the *advocate;* for that greek word signifies both. Now to be an advocate is the proper office of the Holy Spirit, that is, to speak for God the Father, and for Christ in the world, since Christ is gone to heaven; and it is the very same word which we translate *advocate*, 1 John ii. 2, when it is applied to Christ as speaking for us in heaven.

nary to earth; and the Holy Spirit, a distinct person also, who hath the same godhead, was left here as a resident. And thus this eternal God, being the same in the Father, Son, and Spirit, sustains the superior character of a sovereign king, in the person of the Father, and may be said also to sustain these inferior characters of an ambassador and a resident, and to fulfil these offices in the persons of the Son and Spirit.

I confess these similes, borrowed from earthly things, are very imperfect, and insufficient, to represent things divine and heavenly; but perhaps they may serve to strike some little light upon this sacred mystery.

PROPOSITION XIX.

NOR DO THESE INFERIOR NATURES, CHARACTERS, OR AGENCIES, AT ALL HINDER OUR FIRM BELIEF OF THE GODHEAD OF THESE THREE PERSONS, WHICH IS SO PLAINLY EXPRESSED IN SCRIPTURE, NOR SHOULD IT ABATE OR DIMINISH OUR SACRED REGARDS TO THEM.

WHATSOEVER inferior nature may be united to the godhead in any of the divine persons, or whatsoever inferior characters or offices they may sustain in the matters of our salvation, these do not at all take away or diminish the nature or dignity of the godhead, subsisting in that person. The divine nature must still maintain its own honour and eternal dignity; for God must be God for ever, and cannot divest himself of his own real and essential glories, whatsoever condescending forms and offices he may assume, in order to fulfil his wondrous counsels and designs of power or love, of creation or providence, or the greater work of redemption.

To make this very plain, I would express myself here thus, in imitation of Doctor Owen, speaking of Christ. Each nature united in the person of Christ, is entire, and preserves to itself its own natural properties. For he is no less true and perfect God, for being united to man; nor is he less a true perfect man, consisting of soul and body, by being united to God. His divine nature still continues omniscient, omnipotent, infinite, &c. His human nature finite, or limited, in knowledge and power, and was, before its glorification, subject to all infirmities of life and death, to which the same nature in others, absolutely considered, is obnoxious.

In each of these natures, he acts suitably to the essential properties and principles of that nature. As God, he made all things, upholds all things by the word of his power, fills heaven and earth, &c. As man, he lived, hungered, suffered, died, rose, ascended into heaven. Yet, by reason of the union of both these natures in the same person, sometimes the person Christ may be said to do all these things; and sometimes the actions of one nature are attributed to the other; so God is said to lay down his life for us, &c. as I have shewn before.

So in the Holy Spirit, the dignity of divine nature is preserved entire; and thus it acts like itself, with sovereign authority and power in many places of Scripture; though in other places the person of the Spirit is represented as acting in a way of deputation, and, as it were, by commission received from the Father or the Son.

Still we must remember, that under whatsoever inferior characters or offices the Son or Spirit are represented in Scripture, yet their communion in and with the divine nature ceases not, true godhead belongs to them still. And wheresoever true godhead

is, there are all the attributes, honours, and prerogatives of godhead, whatsoever other or lower characters that person may also assume and sustain.

PROPOSITION XX.

WE ARE BOUND THEREFORE TO PAY DIVINE HONOURS TO EACH OF THE SACRED THREE, VIZ. THE FATHER, THE SON, AND THE HOLY SPIRIT, ACCORDING TO THEIR DISTINCT CHARACTERS AND OFFICES ASSIGNED THEM IN SCRIPTURE.

THOUGH each person of the blessed Trinity ought to have divine honours paid to him, yet these honours are generally distinguished and expressed in such a manner, as is suited to their distinct personal characters and operations, as they are revealed to us in the word of God, which is the only rule of our duty and worship.

Let it always be observed and kept in mind, that the only ground, and foundation, and formal reason of the divine worship and honours that are paid to each of the sacred Three, is their godhead, or communion in the divine nature; yet the special forms of the worship and honour which is paid them, arise chiefly from those special offices and characters, which the Scripture assigns to them.

Now in order to shew clearly what are their distinct honours, together with the reasons of them, let us consider in what manner the Scripture represents their distinct characters and offices.

FIRST. OF THE FATHER.

God the Father is represented in Scripture generally as the first or supreme agent, but as acting by his Word or Son, and through his Spirit, and that sometimes in the works of creation and providence, as well as in the works of redemption and salvation.

In "creation," this is sufficiently evident: *Psalm* xxxiii. 6, *By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath,* or Spirit, *of his mouth.* Ephes. iii. 9, *God, who created all things by Jesus Christ.* Heb. i. 2, *By whom,* that is, his Son, *he made the worlds.*

The Spirit also hath his share of agency herein: Thus, Job xxvi. 13, *By his Spirit he garnished the heavens;* and his *Spirit moved on the face of the waters,* Gen. i. 2.

And it is very natural to suppose that, since God the Father created all things by his Son and his Holy Spirit; therefore he says, Gen. i. 26, *Let us make man in our image, after our likeness;* consulting, as it were, with his Son, or with his Son and Spirit, about the creation of man.

This is evident also in the administrations of "providence:" Isaiah ix. 6, *To us a Son is born,* that is, Christ; *the government shall be upon his shoulder.* Psalm cx. 5, *The Lord at thy right-hand, shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath;* that is, Christ exalted to the right-hand of God. Matt. xxviii. 18, *Jesus spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me, in heaven and in earth.* John v. 22, *The Father judgeth no man; but hath committed all judgment unto the Son.*

It is also by the Spirit that the Father manages his providential kingdom. *Psalm* civ. 30, when his creatures faint and die, God "sendeth forth his Spirit, *and they are created,* and thus he renews the face of the earth;" that is, he continues a succession of creatures, by the agency of his Spirit, in the course of his providence. *Isaiah* xxxiv. 16,

when God sends desolation and wild beasts into Babylon, it is expressed, *his Spirit hath gathered them.*

And that he acts thus by his Son, through his Spirit, in the work of our salvation, is much more frequently expressed in Scripture. I shall mention but a few texts, and only such, where both the Son and Spirit are mentioned in the same place. 1 Peter i. 2, *Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.* 2 Cor. i. 21, 22, *He which establisheth us with you, in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; who hath also sealed us, and given us the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.* Rom. v. 1, 5, *We have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.—The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, by the Holy Ghost which is given to us.* 1 Cor. vi. 11, *Washed—justified—sanctified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.* John xiv. 16, 17, Christ saith, *I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter,—even the Spirit of truth.* Acts ii. 33, Jesus *being by the right-hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.* Gal. iv. 4, 5, 6, *God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.* 2 Cor. v. 18, *All things are of God,* that is, the Father, *who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ.* Verse 5, *He that hath wrought us for the self-same thing,* that is, fitted us for heaven, *is God, who also hath given us the earnest of the Spirit.*

And in this sense the evangelical benediction or blessing is thus expressed: *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen.* 2 *Cor.* xiii. 14. And in this sense it is, that we are "baptized in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost," *Matt.* xxviii. 19. For though I believe there may be a good consequential argument drawn from both these Scriptures, to prove that the Son and the Spirit have real communion in the godhead, as well as the Father; yet the first and direct design is to shew, that each of these divine persons have a share, and concur in the work of our salvation; and that faith, and hope, and all the blessings of grace and glory, depend on the eternal love of God the Father, exerting itself in a way of mercy to sinners, in and by the gracious mediation of our Lord Jesus Christ, through the operations of the blessed Spirit.

From all these, and many other Scriptures, it is evident, that in the economy of our salvation, God the Father appears as vested with the supreme majesty and dignity, and maintaining the rights of godhead, as sustaining the supreme character of a divine Creator and Governor, offended by the sins of men, contriving a way of reconciliation, sending his only Son into the world for this end, anointing him with his own Spirit, accepting him in his sacrifice and mediation, crowning him with honours upon the discharge of his atoning work, communicating the Spirit to him, to be sent down plentifully to mankind, proposing the gospel of reconciliation to sinful men, and ordaining and appointing all things which are done by the Son and Spirit, as distinct personal agents in this glorious affair; though in the godhead they are one with him.

Question. "What are those honours which the holy Scripture therefore directs us to pay to God the Father?"

Answer. The honours which we are led more directly and specially to address to God the Father, are these:

I. To adore him as the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; 1 *Peter* i. 3. *Ephes.* iii. 14; as the first in order in the sacred Trinity: To worship him as sitting on the throne of government; *Rev.* iv. 9, 10; as maintaining the dignity and the rights of godhead; as creating all things; *Rev.* iv. 11; and giving laws and orders to all the creation: To humble and abase ourselves before him, as having broken his laws: To express repentance towards God, and say, "Father, we have sinned against thy heavenly Majesty;" *Acts* xx. 21. *Luke* xv. 18: And to return and devote ourselves afresh to God the Father, and subject ourselves to his government, against whom we had rebelled; *Hosea* xiv. 1, 2. There are so many instances of this kind of worship paid to God the Father in Scripture, that I need not dwell longer upon this head.

II. Another part of divine worship due to the Father, is to offer our thanks and praises to him for all those adorable instances of his wisdom, power, and goodness, which appear in the works of creation, providence, and redemption: We praise him, that he should make us at first after his own image, endue us with noble faculties, and furnish this world with rich conveniencies for our use, and propose to our choice immortality and happiness. And when we had abused his goodness, and chosen sin and misery, that he should be pleased to look on fallen sinners with an eye of pity, that he appointed a way for their restoration to his favour and image, that he sent his own Son to become a Mediator, that he laid on him the iniquities of men, and made his soul an offering for sin: That he also appointed the blessed Spirit to renew our natures, that he sends him to restore his own image upon us, to work faith and repentance in our hearts, to bring us into this covenant of reconciliation, and to fit us for heaven. Of this sort of worship, which consists in gratitude, doxology, blessing and praise, to the Father, there are multiplied instances in Scripture.

III. We are bound also to pray to God the Father, for whatsoever mercies we stand in need of, as well as give thanks and praises to him for what we receive, whether these mercies are to be bestowed upon us immediately by the hands of the Son, or of the blessed Spirit; because, both in the economy of nature and grace, he is represented as the prime Agent, vesting his Son and his Holy Spirit with their peculiar characters and offices, and acting towards us in and by them; though their eternal godhead be the same with that of the Father.

Thence it comes to pass, that God the Father is set forth in Scripture as the most proper constant object of our addresses in worship, and that our worship is most generally to be paid to the Father, in the name, or through the mediation of his Son, and by the assistance of his Holy Spirit: For as it is by the mediation of his Son Jesus Christ, he approaches to us, and condescends to be reconciled to us, and by the operations of his blessed Spirit in us, he brings us near to himself; so he expects we should make a return of honour and worship to him in the same order and manner: And this we find appointed by our Lord Jesus Christ, and required and practised by his blessed apostles. This is manifest in a great number of texts in the New Testament:

John xvi. 23, 24, *Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you: Hitherto ye have asked nothing in my name.* Verse 26, *At that day ye shall ask in my name.* John xiv. 16, Christ tell us, "he will pray the Father, and he shall give us another Comforter,—even the Spirit of truth," &c. And *Luke* xi. 13, Christ says, "Your heavenly

Father will give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him." So that the gift of the Holy Spirit, and his divine influences for illumination, sanctification, and comfort, is one of those blessings which we are to ask the Father for, as Christ himself did. Rom. vii. 25, *I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.* Chap. xvi. 27, *To God only wise, be glory, through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen.* 1 Cor. xv. 57, *Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.* Ephes. ii. 18, *Through him,* that is Christ, *we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.* Chap. iii. 14, &c. *I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ—that he would grant you to be strengthened by his Spirit in the inner man. That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith.* Verse 21, *Unto him,* that is the Father, *be glory in the church, by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages.* Chap. v. 20, *Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.* Phil. ii. 11, *That every tongue should confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.* Col. iii. 17, *Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.* Heb. xiii. 15, *By him therefore,* that is Christ, *let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually.* Ephes. vi. 18, *Praying always,* that is to God, *with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit.* Jude verses 20, 21, *Praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God,* that is the Father. Rom. viii. 15, *Ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.*

Now while the Son and the blessed Spirit are made the glorious mediums of our worship, which is addressed in this manner to the Father, they receive honours from us, such as, I think, no mere creature can have a right to, and which may be justly called divine.

But there are proper divine personal honours and worship, which Scripture gives us sufficient foundation to pay more directly to the Son and the blessed Spirit themselves, according to their several characters in the dispensation of the gospel: And in order to find out what these are, let us consider how the Son and the Spirit are represented in the holy Scripture, and what characters they sustain, as we have done concerning the Father.

SECONDLY. OF THE SON.

The Son is represented in Scripture, as being sent down to earth by the Father to do his will; as coming from heaven, and taking flesh upon him, by the appointment of his Father; as undertaking and fulfilling the glorious offices of a prophet, priest, and king, and an example of holiness; as performing all the services, and enduring all the pains and sorrows, and death itself, which were appointed for him as our great Reconciler, in order to make a full and proper satisfaction for our sins, and bring us into the favour of God; as rising again from the dead, and conquering death and hell; as interceding for us in heaven, and reigning there in glory; as sending his Spirit to convince and convert sinners, to sanctify and comfort the saints; as managing all the affairs of nature and grace, for his Father's honour, and the good of his people, according as the Father has entrusted him with the government of the world and of the church; and as being ready to come with thousands of angels to judge the world, to condemn the wicked to eternal punishment, and to reward the saints with an everlasting heaven.

Therefore both the prophecies, precepts, and examples of Scripture give us abundant encouragement to pay several acts of worship to the Son of God.

Question. "What are those acts of worship, and those honours, which the Scriptures lead us to pay to the Son?"

Answer I. We are bound to offer our humble adorations and acknowledgments, our thanks and praises to our Lord Jesus Christ, for all those gracious offices which he has, does, and will sustain and execute for our welfare and everlasting happiness. We adore him for his condescending mercy, and that infinite love that appeared in taking our nature upon him, and dwelling with men in such circumstances of poverty, meanness, and disgrace. We adore his unspeakable pity, in taking our sins upon him, and atoning for our guilt by his agonies in the garden, and his agonies on the cross. We adore and bless the Prince of life who died for us, and rose again, and shews us the way to heaven. We bless him for sending his Holy Spirit, for all the glorious purposes of our conviction, sanctification, and salvation.

Now that direct addresses of praise and adoration may be paid to Christ, is very evident.

That it was our Lord Jesus Christ, or God the Word, who was worshipped by the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and Moses, whensoever God appeared in a bodily shape, and conversed with them, is plain; for the Father never appeared thus. It was he also whom Joshua, Gideon, &c. worshipped. He is the appointed object of worship, Psalm ii. 11, 12, *Serve the Lord with fear—kiss the Son, lest he be angry:—blessed are all they that put their trust in him.* Psalm xlv. 11, *He is thy Lord, and worship thou him. And daily shall he be praised,* Psalm lxxii. 15.

And if we turn to the New Testament, we shall find both commands and examples of adoration and thanksgiving paid to Christ.

John v. 22, 23, *For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son, that all men should honour the Son even as they honour the Father.* Phil. ii. 10, 11, *That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord.* And thus we are bound to adore him as Lord of all things, as universal sovereign of men and angels, of all the upper and the lower worlds. 1 Tim. i. 12, *I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me,* and put me *into the ministry.* 2 Tim. iv. 18, *The Lord,* that is Christ, *shall deliver me from every evil, and will preserve me to his heavenly kingdom: To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.* So in 1 *Peter* iv. 11, there is a doxology or ascription of glory to our Lord Jesus Christ: *To whom be praise and dominion for ever. Amen.* 2 Peter iii. 18, *Our Saviour Jesus Christ: To him be glory, both now and for ever. Amen.* And I think that doxology in *Jude* belongs to Christ, as I have shewn before, verse 25, *To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.* So Rev. i. 5, 6, *Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.* Rev. v. 8, 9, *They fell down before the Lamb—and they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy—for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood;* verses 12, 13, *Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I, saying, Blessing, and honour,*

and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever. Rev. vii. 10, *Salvation to our God, which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.*

II. And as we are bound to offer thanksgiving and praise to him, and to ascribe to him that glory and dominion which is his due; so it is our duty to pray to him, call upon him, and trust in him for those blessings, which he is exalted to bestow as our Saviour.

In short, there is no benefit which he is exalted to bestow upon us, but we may directly address him by faith and prayer for it. The following Scriptures will make this evident:

John xiv. 1, *Ye believe in God, believe also in Me;* in which place, as well as many others, perhaps the word πιστεύω, is better rendered *trust.* Acts xxii. 16, *Be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.* Stephen, just expiring, prayed to Christ, Acts vii. 59, *Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.* 2 Cor. xii. 8, When St. Paul was buffetted by Satan, he prayed to Christ for relief. *For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, thatit might depart from me.* Phil. ii. 19, *I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timotheus.* 1 Thess. iii. 11, *Our Lord Jesus Christ direct our way unto you.* 2 Thess. ii. 16, 17, *Our Lord Jesus Christ himself—comfort your hearts, and establish you in every good word and work.*

The apostle Paul frequently concludes his letters, both to persons and to churches, praying for "grace and peace to descend upon them from our Lord Jesus Christ." The apostle John also does the same, 2 *John*, verse 3, and *Rev.* i. 4, 5. Though whether these are so explicit and direct addresses to Christ, has been matter of doubt and dispute.

And as he is expressly said to be *exalted as a prince and a Saviour, to* GIVE *repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins,* Acts iv. 31, so we may properly pray to him, and trust in him to bestow on us repentance and forgiveness.

III. Self-dedication and subjection of the soul to Christ, as a Lord and governor, is also a part of that honour and worship which is due to him, besides fear and love, &c.

2 Cor. v. 15, *He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live to themselves, but to him who died for them, and rose again.* Chapter viii. 5, *They first gave their own selves to the Lord.* John xiii. 13, *Ye call me, Master and Lord—and so I am.* Chapter xiv. 15, *If ye love me, keep my commandments.*

Here let it be observed also, that in several of these Scriptures we are taught to pray to, or to praise, or to trust in our Lord Jesus Christ, not only for those blessings which he immediately bestows on us, but for those also which are bestowed more immediately by the Holy Spirit, such as illumination, sanctification, and comfort; because, in the economy of the gospel, the Son of God acts towards us in many instances in and by the Spirit, and receives worship on that account; even as the Father acts in and by both the Son and the Spirit, and is accordingly worshipped and praised for the blessings conferred on us by the Spirit or the Son.

Now because the performance of several of these offices, which our Lord Jesus fulfils, seems to require such a degree of knowledge, wisdom, power, glory, and dignity, as belong only to the true God, and for which no person can be sufficient, which has not such an intimate union and communion in and with the divine nature; therefore when we pay these honours to Christ as Mediator, we may be properly said to worship him

with divine honours. We worship the godhead as dwelling in the man Christ Jesus; we worship the glorious person, "in whom dwells the fulness of the godhead bodily;" *Col.* ii. 9.

And let it be noted also, that since he is the true God, or hath real communion in the divine nature, I see no plain reason why we may not worship the person of our Lord Jesus Christ as the true God, even without any immediate regard to his mediatorial offices. Surely, I think, we may adore the *Logos*, or *Word*, who *was with God*, and who *was God*, before the creation of the world, though we have now more express commands and more engaging motives to worship him as dwelling in our flesh; and as having fulfilled his mediatorial offices, and ascended to the highest heavens.

THIRDLY. OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

I proceed now to consider the character and offices sustained by the Holy Spirit in Scripture, and consequently what worship is due to him.

The Holy Spirit is represented in Scripture as a personal agent, through whom God created the world, and manages the affairs of providence and grace; it is the blessed Spirit who instructed his people, published the revelations of his mind and will, inspired his prophets, wrought miracles, conducted our Lord Jesus Christ during his humiliation, raised up Christ from the dead; and then as sent by Christ, when he was exalted in heaven, he influenced and directed his apostles, gave them a variety of miraculous gifts, sends out ministers, calls sinners, convinces and converts them to faith and holiness, sanctifies, comforts, and establishes believers, prepares and seals them for heaven and glory.

I shall not repeat here the Scriptures that mention the agency of the blessed Spirit in creation and providence, but only cite some few of those which respect his influence on, and operations by the Lord Jesus Christ on earth, his agency on the prophets, the apostles, and the saints and churches.

I. ON THE PROPHETS.

Acts i. 16, *The Holy Ghost, by the mouth of David, spake before.* 2 Peter i. 21, *Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.* 1 Peter i. 11, *The Spirit of Christ*, which was in the prophets, *testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.*

II. ON CHRIST ON EARTH.

Matt. xii. 28, *I cast out devils by the Spirit of God.* 1 Tim. iii. 16, *God manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit;* that is, proved to be the Messiah by the working of the Holy Spirit. 1 Peter iii. 18, *Christ—put to death in the flesh, but quickened by*, or in, *the Spirit*, that is, from the dead. Acts i. 2, *After that he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments to the apostles whom he had chosen.*

III. ON THE APOSTLES AND MINISTERS.

John xiv. 26, The Holy Ghost—*shall teach you all things;* and xvi. 13, *He will guide you into all truth—and shew you things to come.* Acts ii. 4, *They were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.* Rom. xv. 19, *Through mighty signs and wonders,* which St. Paul wrought, *by the power of the Spirit of God.* 1 Cor. xii. 4, 8, 11, *Diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.—To one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom, to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit.—But all these worketh that one and the same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.* Which manner of expression denotes a sovereign, a divine, and personal agency of the Holy Ghost.

The Holy Spirit directed the apostles where to exercise their ministry. Acts viii. 29, *The Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot,* of the Ethiopian. Chapter x. 20, *The Spirit said unto Peter, Go with* the servants of Cornelius, *doubting nothing, for I have sent them.* And we read that he bid and forbid Paul to go and preach in this or the other place, as he pleased ; *Acts* xvi. 6, 7.

It is the Spirit who appoints the ministers of the gospel. Acts xiii. 2, *The Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.* And *chapter* xx. 28, the elders of the church of Ephesus were made overseers by the Holy Ghost.

IV. ON THE WORLD, BUT ESPECIALLY ON THE CHURCH.

John xvi. 8, *He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.* Chapter xv. 26, *The Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, shall testify of Me.* Chapter iii. 5, *Except a man be born of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.* Rom. v. 5, *The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost.* Chap. viii. 13, *If ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body.* Verse 16, *The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.* Chapter xv. 16, *Being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.* 1 Cor vi. 11, *Sanctified—by the Spirit of our God.* Titus iii. 5, We are saved *by the washing of regeneration,* and *renewing of the Holy Ghost.* Ephes. i. 13, *Sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise.* 1 Cor. iii. 16, *Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?* Chapter vi. 19, *Your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you.* Thus the Spirit of God dwells in the saints as in his own temple.

And it is he also who directs and governs the churches of Christ. Rev. ii. 7, *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.*

Now as the New Testament is full of expressions of this kind, so there are several hints of this nature in the Old Testament also. David prays for the teaching and the leading of the Spirit of God, *Psalm* cxliii. 10. He prays that the Holy Spirit may not be taken from him, and that God would uphold him by his free Spirit, *Psalm* li. 11, 12. And it is the great promise, frequently repeated, concerning the times of the New Testament, that "the Spirit of God shall be given to men," shall be "poured out upon them," and "not depart from them," but "abide with them," as "a principle of knowledge and holiness;" *Isaiah* xliv. 3, and lix. 21. *Joel* ii. 28.

Thus it is abundantly manifest, that the Spirit of God does almost every thing that is to be done in or by the saints, the ministers, or the churches, in order to build and support the kingdom of Christ in the world, and to apply the redemption of our Lord Jesus Christ, and render it effectual to the salvation of every single Christian.

Now here arise three questions:

Question I. "What honours, or what worship does the Scripture encourage or warrant us to pay to the blessed Spirit, according to these glorious offices, which he sustains for our sakes, and the benefits which we receive from him?"

Answer. It has been already proved, under the Eighth Proposition, "that divine worship is paid in Scripture to the Holy Spirit, for we are baptized into his name," *Matt.* xxviii. 19, that is, we are devoted to his service. The sacred benediction or blessing is desired to descend upon the saints from the Holy Spirit, as well as from the Father and the Son, 2 *Cor.* xiii. 14. And the same is repeated by the apostle John, Rev. i. 4, 5, *Grace unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before the throne, and from Jesus Christ.* Where it is generally supposed, that the blessed Spirit of God is described by seven spirits, because of his variety of gifts and graces.

We are required also not "to quench the Spirit," 1 *Thess.* v. 19; not to "grieve the Holy Spirit of God," *Ephes.* iv. 30; that is, not to resist his convictions and pious motions, as the Jews did in elder and in later days, for which they are severely reproved, *Acts* vii. 51; but to obey and comply with all his holy influences, and have a most sacred regard to them.

And since there are none of us but have in some instances, more or less, resisted and quenched the good motions of the blessed Spirit, I think we may justly be allowed to mourn before him, and confess to him how much we have injured his love, and take shame to ourselves before him, for all these indignities and provocations.

As we are said also in Scripture to be "led by the Spirit," to be "taught by the Spirit," to be "strengthened and comforted by the Spirit," to be "assised in prayer and in every good work," by the same Spirit; so it is our duty to wait and depend on him for instruction, consolation, and assistance, in all the affairs of the christian life.

Question II. "Is it proper for us to address ourselves in a way of prayer or praise directly to the blessed Spirit, since we can neither find it plainly commanded or practised in the word of God?"

Answer. I confess we cannot find in Scripture any such positive and express precepts or examples of petition and praise, so directly addressed to the person of the Holy Spirit, as there are to the Father and to the Son.

One reason may be this, because in the economy of the gospel, he is not seated on a throne of majesty, nor sustains a royal character; but he is rather represented as acting in subordination to the Father and the Son, and *sent* by the Father and the Son, as a prime minister in their kingdom. And therefore since our worship of the blessed Trinity is generally regulated by the economy of the gospel, our direct addresses are generally made to the Father or to the Son, who are seated on a throne, and sustain a royal character in this economy.

I would add also, that though the Son himself is represented as Lord and King in this economy, yet he is often described as acting in subordination to the Father. And

it is for this reason, it may be, that there are but few addresses made directly and distinctly to the Son of God himself in the Scripture, in comparison of those which are made in general to God, or distinctly to the Father.

Another reason why the Holy Spirit has not such direct and express addresses made to him, as the Father and the Son, in Scripture, may be this, that the agency and seat of the Father and Son are described as in heaven, where they dwell to receive our homage and worship, and to send down blessings; but the agency and seat of the Holy Spirit is within us, where he dwells to assist us in paying that homage and worship to the Son and the Father. Now there may seem to be some reason, why our direct adorations and addresses of prayer and praise should chiefly be offered to those persons of the sacred Trinity, which are represented as sitting upon a throne in heaven, rather than to that person who is represented as dwelling within ourselves, and exerting his divine powers there.

Yet, since we have proved before, that the Spirit hath real, true, and proper communion in the godhead, and that he is one God with the Father and the Son, it is certain that he knows all our wants, our desires, and our petitions, for he is omniscient: He is able to supply them all, for he is almighty: And he is particularly ordained in this glorious economy to enlighten, convince, convert, sanctify, comfort, and save us, to bestow gifts, graces, and divine blessings upon us; and to fit us for the inheritance of heaven; and upon these accounts there is sufficient ground, in my judgment, to address ourselves to him by way of prayer, for the spiritual mercies we want; and by way of praise, for the blessings we receive; and especially upon some particular occasions, wherein the agency of the Spirit is most eminently concerned.

There is this plain reason for it:

If there be any mere creature, to whom I can certainly communicate the knowledge of my wants, who has also power to supply them, and has a particular office or appointment for this end, surely all the lights of reason and Scripture lead me to address him by petition for a supply, and to give him thanks for what I have received; much more then may I pay the same sort of honours in a divine manner, to the blessed Spirit, who is the true God, and knows all my wants, and all my prayers and praises.

Finally, Since learned men have found in the primitive ages, some few hints or examples of a doxology, or ascription of praise to the Holy Spirit together with the Father and the Son, though there be no such example in Scripture, and since this has been the frequent custom of the church in all these later ages, I cannot see any sufficient reason to renounce or forsake it, since it is built on such plain and natural reasonings and consequences drawn from Scripture.

It may be expedient to practise it frequently in some churches where it has been long used, lest great offence be given; it may be proper also sometimes to use it on purpose to hold forth the doctrine of the Trinity in times of error, and to take away all suspicion of heresy from the public worship.

Yet I cannot but give my opinion, that since the apostles continually vary their doxologies, it is a piece of christian prudence not to confine one's self everlastingly to any one certain form of doxology, lest the people think that very form to be of sacred necessity: And I am not willing to be the man who should venture to say, there is an absolute necessity of using any doxology, which has no pattern or precept in Scripture.

We must have a care lest we make any thing necessary by mere human custom or constitution, which the holy Scripture hath not made so by a divine appointment. For though I have shewn that there is in Scripture a sufficient foundation to allow and support the common doxology, yet there is no plain and positive command for it there, nor any account of the practice of it.*

Question III. "Is it lawful in our doxologies or ascriptions of praise, to pay the same worship to the Holy Spirit, or to the Son, as we do to the Father?"

Answer I. It is the divine nature or godhead in each person, that is the only foundation of divine worship; and since it is one and the same godhead, that subsists in the Spirit and the Son, as in the Father, therefore when we use such acts and forms of devotion in blessing and praising God, as agree to the godhead considered absolutely in itself, we may pay the same worship to Father, Son, and Spirit, or to the godhead subsisting in three persons. But secondly,

Answer II. If we consider the three persons of the Trinity in their distinct personal properties and characters, it is utterly inconsistent with the whole current of Scripture to pay the same form of address and adoration to each of the sacred Three. As for instance:

We adore the Father as the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, as the first person in the sacred order of the Trinity; we bless him for sending his own Son into our nature, and for appointing him to be our High-Priest, our Sacrifice, and our great Reconciler; we give him thanks for the gift of his Holy Spirit, given first to Jesus Christ our Lord, and by him to us. But we cannot offer the same forms of expression, nor indeed the same acts of inward worship, to the persons of the Son or the Holy Spirit.

In like manner, we give praise and thanks to the Son, that he condescended to be made "partaker of our flesh and blood;" that he "bore our sins in his body on the tree;" that he was "slain, and washed us in his blood, and redeemed us to God, and made us kings and priests to God and his Father." We bless him, because he intercedes for us at the throne in heaven; and that he, by his Father's appointment and deputation, governs and disposes of all things for the good of his church here on earth.

* The doxologies used in the New Testament are these, *viz.* Rom. xi. 36, *Of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: To whom be glory for ever. Amen.* Chap. xvi. 27, *To God only wise be glory, through Jesus Christ, for ever. Amen* Gal. i. 4, 5, *According to the will of God and our Father: To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.* Ephes. iii. 21, *To him be glory in the church, by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.* Phil. iv. 20, *Now to God and our Father be glory for ever and ever. Amen.* 1 Tim. i. 17, *Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory, for ever and ever. Amen.* Chap. vi. 16, *Whom no man hath seen, nor can see: To whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen.* 2 Tim. iv. 18, *The Lord shall deliver me, &c, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.* Heb. xiii. 20, 21, *The God of peace, —through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.* 1 Peter iv. 11, *That God in all things may be glorified, through Jesus Christ; to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.* Chap. i. 3, *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.* 2 Peter iii. 18, *Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; to him be glory, both now and for ever. Amen.* Jude verse 25, *To the only wise God, our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.* Rev. i. 5, 6, *To him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, &c. be glory and dominion, for ever and ever. Amen.* Chap. iv. 11, *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.* Chap. v. 12, *Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches, and wisdom and strength, and honour and glory, and blessing.* Verse 13, *Blessing and honour, and glory and power be to him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever. Amen.* Chap. vii. 10, *Salvation to our God, which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.* Verse 12, *Blessing and glory, and wisdom and thanksgiving, and honour and power, and might, be unto our God, for ever and ever. Amen.* Chap. xix. 1, *Hallelujah, salvation and glory, and honour and power, unto the Lord our God.*

Now these doxologies or thanksgivings cannot be addressed to the person of the Spirit, nor to God the Father.

And I think it is in this sense, we may best understand those words in John v. 22, 23, *The Father judgeth no man; but hath committed all judgment to the Son; that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father:* That is, since the Father, who is represented as the original Governor and Judge of mankind, hath vested the Son, as Mediator, with this authority of government and judgment; therefore those divine honours that belong to the Father, considered as Governor and Judge, may be properly paid to the Son; and this without the least infringement of the rights of godhead, since the Son is also true God, or hath communion in the divine nature." For though I do not think it is the direct design of that place to express the divinity of the Son, yet I think that such a command would not have been given if the Son had not been true God.

Yet let it be noted here, that we cannot address Jesus Christ the Son, considered personally, in all respects with the same honours as we address the Father; because we cannot say to Christ, " Lord, thou art the God and Father of Christ; thou art the original Judge of all, and thou hast given all judgment into the hands of thy Son." These sort of addresses belong peculiarly and only to the Father, and if paid to Christ, personally considered, are ridiculous and absurd.

But to proceed. We may pay also divine honours and praise to the Holy Spirit for his miraculous gifts of old, for inspiring the prophets and apostles, for all his distributions of gifts, graces, and sacred influences to his churches, his saints, and his ministers in our days. But if we mention expressly his deputation to this sacred office by the Father and the Son, then we give thanks to the Holy Spirit, who has accepted this office in our salvation, to enlighten, comfort, and sanctify us; and in executing this blessed office by commission from the Father and Son, distributes his gifts and his graces among us. Now this form of words could not properly be used in an address to the Father, nor to the Son. Yet, in the third place,

Answer III. I would make this remark here, *viz.* That when we mention merely the benefits that we receive from the Son or Spirit, we may give thanks to God the Father for them all, because, in the order of the gospel, he sent both the Spirit and the Son to provide and bestow those blessings on us. Thus we may bless God the Father for the atonement of Christ, and his glorious righteousness; for the providential government of Christ over the nations, and his spiritual government over his church, as well as for the enlightening, sanctifying, and comforting influences of the Holy Ghost, &c.

We may give thanks also to the Son, for all the benefits that we receive from the Holy Spirit, for it is the Son who by the appointment and gift of the Father sends the Holy Spirit to us.

But we cannot properly give thanks to the Son or the Spirit, considered in their distinct personal characters, for all the benefits and blessings which are particularly attributed to the Father in Scripture; such as contriving our salvation, sending the Son to purchase it, and by the hands of the Son sending the Spirit to apply it; for this would bring confusion into that admirable divine order, which God hath established in our salvation.

All these things flow with so clear and natural an evidence from the Scriptures, which have been before cited, that it is needless to cite and repeat them here.

Thus it is abundantly evident, that distinct personal honours must be addressed to the Three sacred Persons, on the account of their different properties, characters, and offices, though the same absolute and essential honours of the deity or godhead may be addressed to all three together, or to God subsisting in three persons. Now in the fourth place,

Answer IV. To give a short and direct answer to the third question. When the common doxologies are used, wherein glory is given to the Father, Son, and Spirit, in the same form of words, we may either understand the absolute essential honours of godhead, which we give to the divine nature, subsisting in Father, Son, and Spirit; or we may in our thoughts give adoration and thanks to each of the sacred Three for the various and distinct offices they sustain, and distinct benefits we receive from them.

If we may dare to make use of the similitude before mentioned, and conceive of a king, whose soul doth also animate and actuate an ambassador extraordinary and a resident in a foreign country, and by their means bestow blessings on his subjects in that foreign country, we may in some measure apprehend how far each of these persons may have communion in the same royal honours, and how far their particular personal honours are distinct from each other: But no human simile can perfectly express things divine.

To conclude, I have here shewn what are the general honours of the godhead subsisting in three persons; and what are the particular divine honours that belong to each person, as sustaining particular characters and offices in the economy of creation, providence, and redemption. And though the Son and the Spirit may be properly addressed with divine honours, as having communion in true godhead, yet since the Scripture is given us to direct our worship, is it not better in our most common and usual addresses to God, to follow the express directions and examples of Scripture, and imitate the inspired apostles, those first and most glorious Christians?

And since we find so great a silence in Scripture of any express precepts or patterns of prayer or praise, directed distinctly to the person of the blessed Spirit, let us not bind it upon our own consciences, nor upon others, as a piece of necessary worship; but rather practise it occasionally, as prudence and expedience may require.

Since we find both precepts and patterns for prayer and praise to be often addressed to our Lord Jesus Christ, let us also often call upon the name of the Lord Jesus, and direct frequent doxologies to the Lamb that was slain.

But since the most frequent patterns and precepts in Scripture lead us to direct our addresses to God the Father, who transacts all his affairs with us in and through his Son by his Holy Spirit, I think we should also make it the most frequent and usual practice in our devotions, "to have our access through Jesus Christ, by one Spirit unto the Father;" *Ephes.* ii. 18; that is, to address the Father, by the mediation of the Son, through the assistance of the Holy Spirit; that this divine economy, which is the substance and glory of the christian religion, and runs through the whole of it, might be

visible also in our common devotions, and appear manifestly to run through the several parts of christian worship in which we are engaged.

PROPOSITION XXI.

IN SO DOING WE SHALL EFFECTUALLY SECURE OUR OWN SALVATION; FOR THE SCRIPTURE HAS MADE OUR SALVATION TO DEPEND ON THOSE RELATIONS AND OFFICES WHICH THESE DIVINE PERSONS SUSTAIN, AND ON THE HONOURS DUE TO THEM ACCORDING TO THESE OFFICES, RATHER THAN UPON ANY DEEP PHILOSOPHICAL NOTIONS OF THEIR ESSENCE AND PERSONALITIES, ANY NICE AND EXACT ACQUAINTANCE WITH THEIR MYSTERIOUS UNION AND DISTINCTION.

I HAVE said before, that I know not how we can pay such honours and worship to Christ or the blessed Spirit, as are expressed and described in the New Testament, unless we suppose them to have some real communion in the divine nature, and to have true godhead belonging to them: Yet if we turn over all the books of the New Testament, we shall find that the stress of our salvation is laid upon our humble sense of our sins, our return to God the Father by sincere repentance, and change of heart and life, and our unfeigned faith in the Lord Jesus. These were the great and glorious things that St. Paul mentions as the sum of his preaching in order to the salvation of men. Acts xx. 21, *Testifying both to the Jews and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.*

And when the things absolutely necessary to salvation are mentioned, which relate particularly to our Lord Jesus Christ, these are generally comprehended in a belief of the characters and offices of Christ, as the great promised Messiah, as a Saviour, a prophet, a mediator, a priest, and proper sacrifice of atonement, as a Lord and king, as an example, as a head of vital influence, as our final judge, &c. together with our sense of his all-sufficiency for those offices, and our sacred practical regards to him in the discharge of them. These are the chief things required in order to salvation; and not a distinct knowledge or belief how or in what manner he is the same with the Father, and in what manner he differs from the Father.

The language in which the requisites of salvation are generally expressed, as they relate to Christ or the Holy Spirit, is as follows:

Acts xvi. 31, *Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved.* Mark i. 15, *Repent ye, and believe the gospel;* that is, the glad tidings of peace with God by Jesus Christ the Messiah. Chap. xvi. 16, *He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.* John viii. 24, *If ye believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins;* that is, "if ye believe not that I am the Messiah, the promised Saviour of mankind." Acts ii. 38, *Repent, and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.* John iii. 3, *Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God;* verse 5, *Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God;* that is, "except he be inwardly regenerated, sanctified, and cleansed from sin, by the influence of the Holy Spirit, as we are outwardly baptized and cleansed with water, he cannot be saved." Rom. viii. 9, *If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.* Verse 13, *If ye through the Spirit do mortify*

the deeds of the body, ye shall live. Chap. x. 9, *If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.* Verse 13, *Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord, shall be saved.* Acts x. 43, *To him gave all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him, shall receive remission of sins.* John i. 12, *But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the children of God, even to them that believe on his name.* Chap. vi. 37, *Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.* Matt. xi. 28, *Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.* Heb. vii. 25, *He is able to save them to the uttermost, that come unto God by him.* Rom. iii. 25, *Him hath God set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood.* 2 Tim. i. 12, *I know whom I have believed,* that is Christ, *and am persuaded he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.* Heb. v. 9, *He became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him.* John vi. 40, *This is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: And I will raise him up at the last day.*

Now faith, or believing in our Lord Jesus, is most frequently mentioned here: And this, so far as we can find it explained in Scripture, and made necessary to salvation, signifies chiefly a believing him to be the Messiah, the Christ, who was foretold by all the ancient prophets as the Saviour of mankind, and it includes in it, or necessarily draws after it, such addresses of the soul, and sacred regards to him, as are suited to his character as the Lord and Saviour of mankind, and the only and all-sufficient Mediator between God and man.

The only difficulty lies in this, that several places of the New Testament seem to make a belief of Christ to be the Son of God necessary to salvation; as John xx. 31, *These things are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through his name.* 1 John v. 13, *These things have I written unto you, that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.* 1 John iv. 15, *Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him.* 1 John ii. 23, *Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father.*

Now the objection runs thus: If we are required to believe that Christ is the Son of God, then we must know and believe what is this relation of sonship to God the Father in order to salvation, and this seems to be more than a mere knowledge and belief of his offices, and his all-sufficient capacity to fulfil them.

In answer to this objection, I have shewn in a particular discourse, which I had designed once to publish at the end of this book, what appears to me the true meaning of this name, *Son of God;* and upon the best judgment I can make, by a comparison of Scriptures together, I am inclined to believe that this name, *Son of God,* signifies, "That glorious person who has in general some peculiar and sublime relation to God the Father, and is appointed to be the Messiah or Saviour;" and the chief things included herein are his office and his divine fitness and capacity to fulfil it; and it is under this notion Christ was preached to the Jews, and believed on by the disciples. It is this that renders him directly suitable to the necessities of perishing sinners, and a most proper object for the exercises of a saving faith. This therefore is the most natural and probable sense of this title, *the Son of God,* in the general use of it in the

New Testament; and especially in those places where our salvation is made to depend on the belief of it.

This imperfect idea or conception of some glorious and peculiar but unknown relation to God, seems to be the utmost which at that time the disciples could well arrive at, concerning his sonship.

How far they could be apprised of his true godhead, I make not the matter of my present inquiry: Their faith of that, sometimes at least, seemed to be fluttering and dubious. But as to their notion of his sonship, they seem to have no certain idea whether it related to his body or his soul, to his divine nature or his office, or to several of these together.

It is hard to suppose, that the eternal generation of the Son of God, as a distinct person, yet co-equal and consubstantial, or of the same essence with the Father, should be made a fundamental article of faith, in that dawn of the gospel, that hour of jewish twilight between declining judaism and rising Christianity. It is very hard to imagine, that God should propose so sublime a doctrine of so obscure and doubtful evidence in that day, as a test to the faith of poor ignorant fishermen, and pronounce damnation on the disbelief of it.

I am persuaded therefore, that faith in him as the divine Messiah, or the all-sufficient and appointed Saviour, is the thing required in those very texts where he is called the Son of God, and proposed as such for the object of our belief: And that a belief of the natural and eternal and consubstantial sonship of Christ to God as a Father, was not made the necessary term or requisite of salvation, neither in those texts before mentioned, nor in any others. Nor indeed can I find it asserted or revealed with so much evidence in any part of the word of God, as is necessary to make it a fundamental article of my faith.

This doctrine of the co-eternal generation and consubstantial and co-equal sonship, is but one of the learned schemes found out to explain the *modus* or manner of one godhead subsisting in distinct persons. Now I would fain have my readers learn that our faith in the Scripture doctrine of the true and eternal godhead of Christ, which is plainly revealed, does not necessarily depend on any of those learned schemes and explications, which, if they are not merely human, yet are of more doubtful revelation, and a matter of difficulty and dispute even among the learned and pious trinitarians.

I grant it indeed a very possible thing, that the great God may propose any sublime truth to our belief, as a test of the obedience of our understandings to his word, and a trial of the submission of our reason to faith and divine revelation. But then such a truth must be revealed with bright evidence, and great plainness in the word of God. And we ought to keep our consciences under so awful a sense of this sovereignty of God, as to make us willing to submit our belief to every such truth plainly revealed in Scripture, even though it may surmount our present comprehension. And since God hath revealed it, I think with sufficient evidence, in Scripture, that the Son and Holy Spirit have real communion with the Father in the divine nature or godhead, and are the one true God, we should be much afraid to allow ourselves in any degrading sentiments concerning those glorious persons, and maintain a holy jealousy, lest we defraud them of that due honour and divine veneration which belong to those sacred Three who are in one godhead.

Yet if I may give up my thoughts and judgment entirely to the conduct of Scripture,

I am there led to believe that the practical concern we have with these three persons of the blessed Trinity, is of far greater importance in the matter of salvation, than any of the nice and speculative notions and terms of art concerning the essence, union, and distinction of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; though we must always take heed to maintain such notions concerning their nature, powers, and properties, as are sufficient to support and justify all the practical honours and duties we pay to them.

PROPOSITION XXII.

THE MAN THEREFORE WHO PROFESSES EACH OF THE SACRED THREE TO HAVE SUFFICIENT DIVINE POWER AND CAPACITY TO SUSTAIN THE CHARACTERS, AND FULFIL THE OFFICES ATTRIBUTED TO THEM IN SCRIPTURE, AND PAYS DUE HONOUR TO THEM ACCORDING TO THOSE OFFICES, MAY JUSTLY BE OWNED BY ME, AND RECEIVED AS A CHRISTIAN BROTHER, THOUGH WE MAY DIFFER MUCH IN OUR NOTIONS AND OPINIONS ABOUT THE EXPLICATION OF THE BLESSED TRINITY, OR THOUGH WE MAY BOTH BE IGNORANT OR DOUBTFUL OF THE TRUE WAY OF EXPLAINING IT.

No man can pay the honours due to our Lord Jesus, unless he believe him to have the dignity and perfections of godhead belonging to him, so far as to answer the purposes of an all-sufficient sacrifice and atonement for sin, so far as to give him universal acquaintance with the infinite affairs of his kingdom in the world and the church, together with equal power to manage and control all things in the regions of heaven, earth, and hell : But these powers and capacities do not depend on any particular mode of explaining the Trinity.

No man can pay the honours due to the blessed Spirit, unless he believe him to have such communion in godhead, as to render him fit for the universal Agent or minister in this most extensive kingdom of Christ, that he may both know and influence all the infinite affairs of creation and providence and grace : But these powers and capacities do not depend on any particular mode of explaining the Trinity.

No man therefore, in my judgment, can pay due honours to the Son or Spirit, unless he believe them to be the true God; though he may pay all necessary honours to them without knowing how to explain the *modus* or manner how they are one God and yet distinct persons.

He therefore that appears to me to be a hearty lover of God and Jesus Christ, a humble inquirer and searcher after truth, that believes and professes our Lord Jesus and the blessed Spirit to have such a real communion in the divine nature, or such an oneness with God, as is sufficient to sustain all the glorious offices which are assigned to them in Scripture, particularly the satisfaction for our sins, the sanctification of our natures, and the government and influence over the visible and invisible worlds, and such as is sufficient to render them the proper objects of divine worship according to those various offices, he shall not be excluded by me from the number of the faithful, for any defect in this article of the catholic faith.

And if he make this confession honestly in any words of his own choosing, and make it evident to me, that his sense and meaning amount to what I have here expressed, I shall venture to call him my fellow-christian and my brother; nor shall I dare to condemn him, though he refuse to make use of the expressions I have here written,

or any other words that I should choose for him. If a man has "faith and knowledge," though I may fancy him to be "rude in knowledge and weak in the faith," yet I am commanded to "receive him," and "not to doubtful disputations;" *Rom.* xiv. 1.

But while I am professing christian charity, I would set a due honour and defence upon the christian faith; and amidst all my love to men, I would remember what honours are due to Christ, *my Lord and my God.* "Whosoever abideth not in the necessary doctrine of Christ, hath not God, nor is he to be received into the church," nor the house, as a christian brother, or as a friend; 2 *John* verse 9. If I read and believe the word of God, I must believe there are some such gross errors in doctrine, that will as effectually exclude from the church of Christ and from the kingdom of heaven, as gross immoralities in practice: There are such things as *damnable heresies*, which will bring upon the professors of them *swift destruction;* and the apostle assures us that one of these heresies is a "denial of the Lord that bought them;" 2 *Peter* ii. 1.

CONCLUSION.

Before I put a full end to this little treatise, I would ask leave of my readers, and especially those of younger years, to propose to them these two heads of advice relating to the doctrine of the Trinity. The first refers to our inquiry into the doctrine itself. The second to our establishment in the faith of it.

The directions I would give concerning our inquiries into this great doctrine, are these:

I. "Seek for it chiefly in the word of God;" build your faith entirely upon this word, and not upon the books of men. There you will be sure to find no human additions to it, but the pure divine doctrine itself. And whensoever you consult the writings of men on this subject, dare to admit nothing but what you see evidently proved by the word of God. Judicious collections out of the holy Scripture relating to this article, are of great use, when they are not chosen, and culled out, and put together merely to serve and support some particular scheme of explication. Though the writings of men may be of great service, yet you must use them only as helps, not as determiners of your faith.

II. "Read the word with holy reverence and humility of soul," resolving to believe whatsoever you find there plainly revealed, whether you can reconcile it or no to your own fancies or former opinions. Read with an awful submission of your understandings to the authority of God speaking in his word. See Proposition XVI.

III. "Read and pursue your inquiries with a solemn concern about the importance of this doctrine:" Let not a vain, light, airy spirit tempt you ever to think or speak of it as a trivial matter, nor to mix it with common careless talk, nor profane it by noisy janglings, and a vain affectation of disputes about so divine a mystery. I fear this is a most provoking sin in our day.

IV. "Read with an abasing sense of your own weakness and darkness of mind," and with importunate prayer to God for the teachings of his Spirit, who searches the deep things of God, and is promised to be given to those that ask it, and to lead them into all necessary truth.

V. "Set yourself to this work with great solemnity," and let your judgment determine itself in this important article, as in the presence of God, your supreme and final Judge. Dare not to indulge any old prejudices, or a vain affectation of novelty. Do

not consult with flesh and blood, or suffer any carnal interests to have influence upon your judgment, or to bias your assent to any principle or opinion. Let nothing but the convincing evidence of Scripture decide the question, and settle your faith. Take heed lest you build your belief upon any reasons or motives which you cannot justify to your conscience under the sharpest and severest inquiry: Nor take up merely with such a shew of argument, either to confirm or renounce any important article as you dare not produce at the bar of God, and speak it boldly as a proof of your faith in the face of men and angels.

VI. And while you read and meditate on this subject, and pursue your inquiries about this important point of religion, " watch and preserve a pure and holy frame of soul." Take heed lest you indulge a haughty, or a sensual, sinful temper; examine your hearts and your ways, and remove every iniquity; lest the great and dreadful God, who is jealous for the honour of his name, should be provoked to leave you to your own darkness, or abandon you to the foolish fires of fancy; lest he should give you up in judgment to the vain dictates of a proud and conceited mind, and thereby you may be entangled in the most pernicious errors, or lost in everlasting wanderings.

The directions which relate to our establishment in the faith of the Trinity are these:

I. " Furnish your memory with those portions of holy Scripture, wherein this sacred doctrine is most clearly expressed," and by which it is most effectually supported: That you may be *ready to give to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear;* 1 Peter iii. 15; that you may have an answer ready at hand to repel the assaults of error and temptation. The sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, and the shield of faith in that word, are admirable pieces of christian armour and artillery in an evil day.

II. " Maintain a firm and resolute assent to what the word of God plainly reveals concerning this divine doctrine," and be not ever wavering and tossed in your mind, with a kind of doubtful uncertainty, merely because you cannot explain the matter, and adjust every difficulty.

Keep on your spirit such a holy awe of the majesty and authority of God speaking in his word, that you may never stagger in the faith, which you can find so clearly dictated from heaven. Nor be ashamed to profess it at all proper occasions.

Having settled the substance of this doctrine in your minds, and founded it on the plain and solid evidence of Scripture, you ought not to doubt and waver, much less to desert your faith, merely because you cannot answer every objection against it: For even in the affairs of nature and the civil life, as Dr. Owen well expresses it, " If the objections wherewith we may be entangled be not of the same weight and importance with the reason for which we embraced any opinion, it is a madness to forego it on the account thereof. And much more must this hold amongst the common sort of Christians, in things spiritual and divine. If they will let go, and part with their faith in any truth, because they are not able to answer distinctly some objections that may be made against it, they may quickly find themselves disputed into atheism."

In every sacred truth that is revealed to us, a plain evidence and full assurance that God hath said it, should be a sufficient answer to a thousand objections.

III. Since a particular knowledge of the *modus*, or manner, how three persons are one God, is not clearly revealed in Scripture, and therefore not necessary to salvation, " Be not too fond of any learned explications of this sacred mystery." Do not give

into them too soon, nor yield your full assent to them too easily, nor be furiously zealous in the defence of them. Do not fix and root your judgment too fast in any of these schemes of explaining the Trinity, till you see most abundant and convincing evidence; and take care that you do not mingle any of these explications with the plain scriptural doctrine, so as to make them necessary articles of your faith. Hereby you will obtain great advantage in a day of temptation, as will appear thus:

You may observe it has been the usual and subtile practice of our adversaries to cavil at our faith of the Trinity, by perplexing some part of our learned explications and schemes with knotty objections and arguments: And many times they have found themselves so successful herein, that they have sorely shaken the faith of many a Christian, merely because he had mingled his opinions and his faith together, and joined the scriptural doctrine of the Trinity together with some learned hypothesis to explain it, in the same article of his faith. Whereas a man that well distinguishes between the plain scriptural doctrine itself, and the particular explications of it, holds his faith in the divine doctrine firm and unmoved, while several human forms of explication are attacked, and perhaps destroyed. Such a Christian may triumph in a day of temptation, and may defend his creed by keeping close to what the Scripture has most evidently revealed, while he sees others that have built a high superstructure of notions about this doctrine, make shipwreck of their opinions and their faith together.

IV. I would add this also, that one effectual method to establish the heart in this divine and important truth, is "to take a due survey what a sacred influence it has into all the parts of our holy religion:" And when we feel the daily want of the blessed Trinity, we shall not easily part with the doctrine. Let us keep a humble sense of the deplorable state of sin and ruin, into which the fall of man has brought us, and then we may see what need there is of the presence of a God in all the parts of our recovery and salvation. We may then see what need we have of so divine and all-sufficient a Reconciler as Jesus the Son of God, to bring us into his favour; and what need of the almighty operations of the blessed Spirit to create us anew, and to restore us to his image. And since true and proper divinity, or godhead, is ascribed to those two glorious persons who are employed in this work, our hopes hereby have a surer refuge, and our faith a more immediate and divine foundation. It is quite contrary to our duty and our interest, to change such a Saviour and such a Sanctifier, for any meaner beings which men may be tempted to put into these sacred offices, since the great and blessed God, subsisting in three persons, is pleased to undertake them, in various forms of condescension.

To conclude, let us with humble faith read and believe this glorious doctrine of the christian Trinity, so far as it is declared in the holy Scripture: Let us adore God the Father, as the Author of all our mercies and our hopes. Let us trust in Jesus Christ his Son with a divine faith, as our all-sufficient Saviour, and obey him as our sovereign Lord. Let us wait for and seek the almighty and divine influences of the blessed Spirit to enlighten, to sanctify, and to comfort us, and to carry us onward in our way to heaven. Let us be constant and zealous in paying these divine honours to the sacred Three, which the word of God hath appointed, and upon which Scripture hath taught us to expect eternal life: And then, if God be faithful, and his gospel true, eternal life shall be our portion in the other world, though we know not how to explain all divine mysteries in this.

Now to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, three persons and one God, be all honour, and glory, and everlasting praise. *Amen.*

DISSERTATIONS

RELATING TO

THE CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE

OF THE

TRINITY.

THE FIRST PART, VIZ.

I. THE ARIAN INVITED TO THE ORTHODOX FAITH.

II. GOD AND MAN UNITED IN THE PERSON OF CHRIST.

III. THE WORSHIP OF CHRIST AS MEDIATOR FOUNDED ON HIS GODHEAD.

THE

PREFACE.

WHILE I was writing the little treatise of the *Christian Doctrine of the Trinity*, the subject carried my thoughts away into several occasional sentiments, and incidental truths. These would have interrupted the thread of my designed discourse too much, if they had been mingled with the several propositions to which they belong. I thought it proper therefore to throw them into distinct dissertations, several of which I had concluded before that treatise was made public.

It was my design to have finished them all at that time; but some providential occurrences broke off those studies, and I have been farther prevented by other requests of my friends, and my own promised engagements of various kinds, from resuming that subject again, till a few months ago this last winter. A man who through long weakness of body is rendered sometimes incapable of applying himself above six or seven hours in a week to any peculiar study, distinct from his necessary work, may be well excused if he is slow in the publication of any thing upon such a controverted doctrine.

I confess, when I wrote that little book, I had no purpose of engaging myself in controversy. My intention was only to exhibit the plain naked doctrine of the Trinity, *viz.* "That the Father, Son, and Spirit, are represented in Scripture under three personal characters, and yet as having communion in one godhead," without entering into any particular modes of explication, and without pretending to say new things on that article, either by way of position or argument. My chief view and design was to establish plain unlearned Christians in the faith of that doctrine, by those scriptural evidences, which seemed to me strong and convincing; and to lay a foundation for extensive charity, by making it appear that no particular mode of explication was plainly and evidently determined in the word of God: And that the Scripture has made our salvation to depend on those offices which these divine persons sustain, and on the honours due to them according to those offices, rather than upon any deep philosophical notions of their essence and personalities, any nice and exact acquaintance with their mysterious union and distinction.

I presumed therefore, that if any persons who disbelieved the proper deity of the Son and Spirit, had a mind to signalise themselves by an opposition to the common faith, they would have chosen some author of superior rank, who had entered more largely into the merits of the cause, and by a full and particular explication of the scriptural proofs thereof, had vindicated that doctrine in a more complete and controversial manner. But I found myself mistaken; for some months after my treatise appeared in the world, there was published a professed answer to it, bearing this title, *A sober Appeal to a Turk or an Indian, concerning the plain Sense of Scripture relating to the Trinity; being an Answer to Mr. I. Watts's late Book, intitled, The Christian Doctrine, &c.* I have a very great disinclination to handle the saw of controversy, especially in matters so divine and sacred; and my imperfect health does by no means permit me to lay out many hours in such work. My

life itself, that is, all the useful moments of it, are so shortened and diminished hereby, that I find them all much too few for the more agreeable parts of that service to which Christ has called me; and upon this account I shall not think myself obliged to enter the lists with any antagonist whatsoever, upon matters of dispute and intricacy, either now or hereafter.

Yet since I had promised some occasional dissertations on this subject, I found it was much expected by the world, that I should then take some notice of this author and his work, which I have now done in several of the discourses which I have written, and endeavoured to lay a foundation for the support of the common doctrine of the Trinity, by obviating some of his most plausible objections.

And since I never designed to give a large and particular answer to the *Sober Appeal*, for the reasons already mentioned, I think it proper here to make a few general remarks on the style and manner of that writing.

And first I acknowledge my obligations to the author, for the terms of decency and respect, and the language of friendship with which he treats me, both in the preface and in the greatest part of his book. I receive them as the unmerited civilities of a courteous stranger: And had I the happiness of knowing his name, perhaps I should find just occasion to make an equal return. But while I am permitted to learn his character no otherwise but from his writing, I can only treat my unknown friend with all that esteem which his writing deserves. For I must confess, how superior soever others may appear in learning and argument, yet I am not willing any writer should exceed me in the practices of a christian temper.

But I hope my respondent will not take it ill, if I mention a few instances, wherein he seems to have been awakened by his zeal to forget his usual style: As when he takes occasion to pity me and all my friends, for the shifts we are put to in the defence of our doctrine. When he tells me he will not triumph over the weakness of my arguments, and yet affects a triumph in several places; with some other such superior airs, which he assumes in the course of the debate. This language carries a sort of sovereignty and contempt in it, but adds neither force nor ornament to the paragraph or the cause.

Again, He seems to indulge the same insulting strain, when he repeats so often the words *resistless* and *over-bearing*, which I think I had never used but once or twice at most. This represents me as though I had supposed every single argument of mine to be over-bearing and resistless; whereas in those places where I use either of these words, they refer chiefly to the whole strength of all the arguments put together, and which, I confess still, I cannot resist; and multitudes of Christians have confessed the same. If I any where use such language on slighter occasions, I receive the reproof.

He seems again to forget his usual candour, when he construes my words in his preface, and his appendix, as casting damnation on all those who disbelieve the eternal deity of Christ, by my citing the words of the apostle, 2 *Peter* ii. 1, *Damnable heresies, denying the Lord that bought them*, page 358. I must confess, I do not think that Scripture particularly refers to those that deny the godhead of Christ; but rather to those who deny him as a holy Governor of his people: Or else it reproves in general all those that deny Christ in any of those powers, properties, offices, or characters, the belief of which is made necessary to salvation. Now when the first

part of my book is spent in proving the deity of Christ and the Spirit, the second part of it in declaring their personality, and the third or last part in surveying their several offices and relations in which they stand to us, and upon a recapitulation I make this conclusion, "That there are such things as damnable heresies, when persons deny the Lord that bought them;" this should, with much more justice, be referred, as I designed it, to the denial of all or any of these preceding properties, characters, or offices of Christ, the belief of which the Scripture makes necessary to salvation, and not merely be confined to the single doctrine of his deity.

Another thing I am constrained to take notice of is, that my unknown friend the Appellant had written with a greater degree of open fairness and evidence, if he had attacked my propositions in the method in which I have placed them, wherein they give mutual light and force to each other: But he has chosen rather to single out for his first attacks some special paragraphs out of distant places of my book, whereby he seems to insinuate to the reader the weakness of my whole argument; and he spends above sixty pages upon these, till at last he himself confesses, that he "thinks it high time to enter upon the arguments I have used," page 62. And even then he "entreats patience once more" for three pages, ere he enters upon a regular form of objection, page 65. But however it be, I have this advantage by it, that as other circumstances permit me not to engage in any regular or continued controversy, so I am the better justified to all the world in taking notice of what this author hath objected, in several unconnected dissertations.

I have not much reason to complain of misrepresentations of my sense by the Appellant, in the matters of argument. One of the most remarkable instances of this kind is, when he supposes me to believe a "greater distinction between the sacred Three in the godhead itself," than my words amount to, as page 10, and other places. For though I confess the scriptural representation of personal distinctions in some places is pretty strong, yet I have nowhere asserted three literal and proper distinct personalities to be internal and essential to the godhead itself. In general, I must own, he has written with a degree of impartiality and fairness in this respect beyond what is usual in such controversies; and if ever he has mistaken my sense, I persuade myself that it was not done with design, because, except the places mentioned, there is a general appearance of justice and candour running through his arguments. Yet I cannot but take notice of one passage, wherein he has not done the Rev. Dr. Waterland the same justice, in a citation, pages 12 and 153, where he twice represents him as declaring, that "the Doctrine of the Trinity is thoroughly understood but by few in comparison," whereas that learned author had only asserted, that "the controversy of the Trinity is thoroughly understood but by few in comparison," which makes a great difference in the sense: For multitudes of the vulgar rank of mankind may understand the doctrine of the Trinity, sufficient for their own salvation, while the learned controversies that relate to it are much unknown by them.

I own the light I have received from this author, in the different turn he hath given to some few of those Scriptures which I had brought as proofs of my doctrine, which, I must acknowledge, carries such a degree of probability, as to weaken the force of my arguments derived from thence; such are *John* iii. 13. *Zech.* xi. 12, 13, and perhaps one or two more; for I would not willingly pervert one text of Scripture from its native and sacred sense, to support any article of my faith.

I take this opportunity here also, together with my thanks to this author, to acknowledge the goodness of some other friends, who by their obliging letters have made other occasional exceptions to any incautious sentences which I had used in some part of my treatise; which being written chiefly for private Christians, had not all that strict accuracy in it that controversy required. But these expressions I shall endeavour to correct in the next edition, which my booksellers tell me will be quickly wanted.

With regard to the business of charity, which I mentioned before, as well as the matters of argument for the defence of the deity of our blessed Saviour, I have other dissertations lying by me, which give some general solutions to the chief scriptural difficulties in this controversy, and make it appear that the common doctrine of the Trinity stands firm upon the greatest part of those scriptural proofs by which I have endeavoured to support it. And I hope it shall also be sufficiently proved, that the zealous contenders for this doctrine are not always so deficient in their charity as they are too often represented.

I know there are some things will be objected to these dissertations, *viz.*

Objection I. Since I have several more discourses by me, already finished, it will be naturally demanded, "Why I have not published them at once? Why I have given the world at present only these three?" To this I answer, That these three Essays enter not so far into the particular distinctions between the sacred persons, but chiefly maintain their communion in the same godhead: I thought therefore it was much more proper to send these abroad first; hoping that if my labours of this kind find acceptance among my friends, I might then be better encouraged to publish the rest in a few months' time; in some of which I found myself constrained to speak more largely and particularly of the "distinction of persons in the sacred Trinity."

But on the other hand, if the general doctrine of the communion of Christ in the deity, or the union of two natures in one person, or divine worship paid to Christ the Mediator, cannot be supported, our particular modes of explaining the distinction of the divine persons are all destroyed and rendered useless.

Objection II. It will be censured as a fault by many, "that I repeat the same things." Truly the reason is, because these Essays were written at distant times: And besides, in such a controversy, it is necessary sometimes to set the same things before the view of the reader, which would have but little force, or perhaps be forgotten, if they were only intermingled with other parts of the controversy, and by that means were out of sight.

Objection III. Some will make it a matter of offence and scandal, that "I do not write with that full assurance of every thing as others would do in the like case." To this I answer, That since the studies of these last years, I think I am established afresh in the belief of the deity of Christ and the blessed Spirit, and assured of it upon sufficient grounds, that they are one with the Father in godhead, though they are represented in Scripture as distinct persons. But as to the various particular explications of this doctrine, and incidental arguments that attend it, I desire to believe and to write with a humble consciousness of my own ignorance, and to give my assent but in proportion to the degrees of light and evidence. I am persuaded, if every man would proportion his assent by the same rule, much of our modern assurance would be

abated; we should have but few dogmatists amongst us, even in some important doctrines; and by this method perhaps the most positive and confident assertors of their own opinions would become the most doubtful and modest of all men.

Besides, when I consult the Scripture, or human writers, on so sublime a subject, I do not come with all my opinions fixed and determined, but I read in order to receive further light, and therefore I would write as one who may be mistaken, and who is honestly seeking truth. I know the weakness of human understanding, and how easily we are led into error. I have often seen occasion to retract my former sentiments, and correct them by further discoveries; and I esteem a modest and cautious manner of speech, in most of the controverted points, to be one excellence of a fallible writer, and retractation of an error to be yet a superior attainment: And though this is made sometimes a matter of scoff among vulgar souls, it is always an honour among the wise.

Objection IV. "Some think, that I do not write with indignation and zeal enough, and that I treat the adversaries of the divinity of Christ with too much gentleness for any man who professes to be a friend to that sacred article, and a lover of the blessed Saviour."

I might make several replies to such an objection. As,

Answer I. If my blessed Saviour has loved his own enemies so as to die for them, and to entreat them in the gentlest manner to be reconciled to God the Father by him, I persuade myself he will never be angry with me, if I shew so much love to those who dishonour him, as to entreat them in a gentle manner, after his example, to be reconciled to God their Saviour, to confess his sublime character, and to pay him divine honours.

Answer II. I would not willingly call every man an enemy to Christ, who lies under some doubts of his supreme godhead. My charity inclines me to believe that some of them, both read their Bibles carefully, and pray daily for divine instruction to lead them into all truth: That they honour and adore that glorious person whom they believe to be the brightness of his Father's glory, and by whom he created the worlds, who condescended to take a human body, and to die for sinners; and that they trust in him, and love him above all things, beside God the Father, though perhaps some culpable prejudice may cleave to their minds, whereby they are prevented from receiving that light and evidence of his divine nature, which, in my opinion, shines clearly in the word of God: And I cannot but hope, that such humble and sincere inquirers will not miss any of the necessary articles of faith.

Answer III. I am well assured that the wisdom which comes from above is first pure, and then peaceable; that we are required in the gospel not to call for fire from heaven, even upon such Samaritans who will not receive Christ at all, but with all meekness to instruct those that oppose themselves, that they may be recovered out of any dangerous snares. The methods in which divine controversy has generally been written, have proved fatal to religion, and utterly improper to promote the truth. When, we rail, we set our opponents a railing too; and in such a frame of spirit, we are neither fit to instruct others, nor are they fit to receive instruction. The wrath of man works not the righteousness of God, nor the knowledge of Christ. These angry fits of zeal do but awaken the disorderly passions of men, and tempt them to resist every argument that comes armed with such assumed sovereignty and fire. It is God only who has a right and a power to convince the obstinate by a spirit of burning: He may

clothe an angel in flame, or inspire a prophet to be the minister of his shining vengeance, but I had rather be made a humble messenger of his light and love. The great God can send conviction in the language of death and ruin, but he does not exert this power till gentler methods have been tried in vain.

Besides, in contests and debates among men, much darkness is consistent with vehement heat. These qualities are found in greatest perfection in the nether world; and sometimes on earth the fiercest heat has the deepest darkness attending it. Light itself, when joined with noise and fire, has not the most happy influence to improve and refine the mind. A flash of lightning rather affrights than guides us: The voice of thunder carries more terror than instruction in it: The soul bars up all the avenues of its understanding against truth itself, when it demands entrance by such human methods of violence. It is only the gentle approaches of truth, like the morning light, which open the windows of the soul, and make it willing to receive all further discoveries. I add in the last place,

Answer IV. That if by such methods as these, I shall be so far honoured of God, as to recover any who have departed from their former principles, or establish those who doubt, I am well assured that my blessed Lord will esteem it as a better service done for himself, than if I had guarded his sacred doctrines by scattering all the terrors of hell round about them, than if I had thundered out damnation against disbelievers, and awakened the rage of every gainsayer, without the least hope of conviction. There was once a "great and strong wind that rent the mountains, and brake the rocks in pieces, after the wind an earthquake, and after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire, in the earthquake, nor in the wind; then a still small voice was heard; God was in that voice, and visited his prophet who was jealous for the Lord of hosts;" 1 *Kings* xix. 11—13.

I conclude the preface with one request to my readers of every kind, whether arian or athanasian; and that is, that they would not make all their former, nor their present opinions an everlasting standard of truth, and a test whereby to judge of every thing they read: And that they would not suddenly pronounce nonsense or heresy upon every sentence that differs from their former belief.

I entreat them on one side, that they would search and examine honestly, whether it be not possible that such a sublime and mysterious doctrine as the deity of Christ, may be true, when some of the more indefensible appendages of it are lopped off; which doctrine, when mingled with these appendages, was very hard to be believed or defended: And on the other hand, I desire that my readers would consider impartially, whether so difficult a doctrine as this of the sacred Trinity may not be better defended in itself, and more effectually let into the mind of disbelievers, by granting those things which seem to be the obvious sense of some Scriptures, and removing other things which Scripture does not assert, and which were some of the chief bars against their belief of it.

In the mean time, while we all employ a diligent and impartial search after these sacred truths, and are seeking to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord, let us with daily and importunate requests implore the assistances of the blessed Spirit, since our Saviour has promised to send him as a guide into those very truths which relate to himself. John xvi. 14, *He shall glorify me: For he shall receive of mine and shew it unto you.*

DISSERTATION I.

THE ARIAN INVITED TO THE ORTHODOX FAITH:

OR,

A PLAIN AND EASY METHOD TO LEAD SUCH AS DENY THE PROPER DEITY OF CHRIST, INTO THE BELIEF OF THAT GREAT ARTICLE.

SECTION I.

WHEN Christians are divided in their sentiments, and break out into party quarrels, the names of their opinions will be tossed to and fro, as terms of reproach and scandal. *Arian* is made a word of infamy, and *orthodox*, on the other hand, is turned into a jest, a matter of mere ridicule. But I have no inclination either to rail or laugh; nor would I use one of these words in a reproachful sense, nor the other in a ridiculous one; and therefore it is proper that I should here explain my meaning, that wheresoever these words occur in the following papers, the reader may have just ideas of them.

I do not love to affix such names to any party of men as they themselves utterly disown: This has a tendency to irritate the spirits of those whom we design to enlighten, and reduce to the faith and profession of our own sentiments, and therefore it should be avoided as much as we can. Yet it often so happens in the affairs of mankind, that it is hardly possible to describe the followers of any particular sect or opinion, when it is necessary to speak of them, without using the same names which the world generally gives them: And the world generally gives them the name of those who have been the most famous assertors or professors of such kind of doctrines.

As it is therefore my design in the present Essay to address those who may have entertained scruples or doubts about this great doctrine of the "Deity of Christ," or have departed from their former principles, I would treat them with all gentleness: And I freely declare, that I believe the name of *arian* hath been often of late given to such as have by no means deserved it, and are no abettors of the old principles of Arius.

An *ancient arian* is one who believes the Son and Holy Spirit to be mere creatures: He believes our Lord Jesus Christ to be a glorious person, but still as much inferior to the true and eternal God, as a creature differs from the Creator; for he believes his human soul, or that spirit which supplies the place of it, to be his highest or divinest nature, and that it was produced by the power and arbitrary will of God the Father, some time before the world was made, and thus he believes it to be properly a creature, utterly denying the true and proper godhead of Christ; yet he owns him to be sometimes called God in Scripture, on the account of his

great likeness to God, his acting in the name of God, and his government of the world. And thus by changing and diminishing the idea of the word *God*, and reducing it to an inferior sense, he allows an inferior godhead to belong to Christ. He believes also this glorious spirit did take upon him a human body, was born of the virgin Mary, and thus became a complete man, in the fulness of time appointed by the Father. This is usually represented as the general sense of the ancient followers of Arius.

Now it is evident that the modern disbelievers of the divinity of Christ, or most of them at least, have refined the ancient doctrines of Arius, and thereby, perhaps, rendered their sentiments more defensible, at least in their own opinion: But if, through divine assistance, I shall become so happy as to lead any that believe even these ancient arian principles into the doctrine of the divinity of Christ, by natural and easy steps, I would fain persuade myself that some of the moderns will not shut their eyes against the evidence of light, nor resist the force of such attraction, but yield to it with greater ease.

But if this expectation be too presuming, and no disbeliever be recovered to the common faith of the deity of Christ, yet I must indulge my hope thus far at least, that some wavering, doubtful, and unsettled Christians may be established in their faith by some of these attempts.

Before I proceed, it is necessary also that I should tell what I mean by the word *orthodoxy*. For several centuries past, this word has been applied to that explication of the doctrine of the Trinity, which supposes the divine nature to be but one numerical or individual essence or being; and that this essence is the same in the Father, the Word, and the Spirit. That these three are so far distinct as to lay a foundation for the Scripture to speak of them in a personal manner, as *I*, *thou*, and *he;* and upon this account they are called *three persons:* But that they are not so distinct as to have three distinct consciousnesses, for they are only supposed to be three incomprehensible differences in one and the same numerical essence of God, or in one and the same individual spirit. That in the person of Christ two distinct natures are united, God and man; whence it comes to pass that some proper divine characters, and some human, are attributed to the same person.

Now I ask leave to try whether it is not possible to lead one who has favoured the arian sentiments toward a belief of the chief parts of this doctrine, which for some ages past has obtained the name of *orthodoxy*, though I confess there are some other parts of it which are not so defensible.

SECTION II.

The method which I shall pursue in my present attempt, is to propose these following queries:

Query I. Is it not a principle of natural religion, and universally confirmed by reason and Scripture, that there is but one God, one true and living God, one eternal and almighty Creator and supreme Governor of all things, one infinite being, who is the first cause and last end of all?

Query II. Have you not always believed this God to be one Spirit, one single Spirit, one conscious mind, and not made up of two or three conscious minds or spirits? Nor

am I going to lead you into any other idea of the great and blessed God, or to give you any occasion to imagine that we believe two or three gods.

Query III. Has not this great and blessed God assumed to himself in his word some peculiar names, titles, characters, and prerogatives, whereby he will distinguish himself from every thing which is beside and beneath him, that he might give his people a distinct knowledge of himself, and secure them from the danger of paying divine honours to any thing that is not God? See *Christian Doctrine of the Trinity*, Propositions IV. V. VI.

Query IV. Are not *Jehovah*, the *true God*, the *great God*, the *mighty God*, and *God blessed for ever*, the *God of Abraham*, the *Lord of hosts*, the *King of kings*, the *Lord of lords*, the *First and the Last*, some of these distinguishing names and titles of God?

Are not the "searching of the heart of man," "omnipresence," "omnipotence," and "the works of creation, and the conservation of all things," some of these divine characters or prerogatives? See *Christian Doctrine*, Propositions VII. VIII. which propositions, with the greatest part of their explication, may be vindicated against all reasonable objections.

Let it be observed, that the inquiry here is not, how far or in what degree some of these titles, characters, powers, and operations may possibly belong to an exalted creature, in the abstracted nature of things, or by the favour of God? But whether God in his word has not made these titles, operations, and characters, his own appropriate prerogatives, to distinguish himself from inferior beings? And has he not expressed himself with a divine solicitude and sacred jealousy in this matter, that Jehovah is his name, and he will not give his glory to another?

Query V. Are not these names, titles, and prerogatives, ascribed to our Lord Jesus Christ, in several places of Scripture, in such a manner as would naturally lead the unlearned and common Christian into a belief that they are the very same characters whereby the great and blessed God has distinguished himself? Are they not often attributed to our Lord Jesus Christ, without any such evident limitations or restrictions as to distinguish them from the prerogatives of the one true God?

Nay, let me add further, are they not expressed in such a manner, and so applied to Christ, that would lead even the wise, the learned, and the cautious reader into the same sentiments, if he had not imbibed some other opinion, and upon that account endeavoured to evade this sense? See *Christian Doctrine of the Trinity*, Propositions VIII. and IX. The multitudes of pious Christians, learned and unlearned, that in all ages of the church have honestly read their Bibles, and have fallen into this sentiment of things, after the strictest search to find the truth, are a sufficient answer to this query, and a proof of the affirmative.

Query VI. Is here not then the appearance of a very considerable difficulty, how to reconcile these ascriptions of divine titles and prerogatives both to God the Father and to Jesus Christ, without breaking in upon the sacred doctrine of the unity of God, which is established both by reason and Scripture? And how shall this difficulty be removed, but by a consultation of those sacred writings wherein we find the same divine characters ascribed both to Christ and to the Father.

Query VII. Does not the Scripture give us a very natural and evident solution of

this difficulty, when it assures us that there is a most peculiar and intimate union, or oneness, between the great God and his Son Jesus Christ? Col. ii. 9, *In him dwelleth all the fulness of the godhead bodily.* John x. 30, *I and my Father are one;* chap. xiv. 10, *I am in the Father, and the Father is in me;* verse 9, *He that hath seen me hath seen the Father;* verse 10, *I speak not of myself—the Father that dwelleth in me doeth the works.* 1 John v. 7, *There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Spirit, and these Three are One.* Exod. xxiii. 20, 21, *I send an angel before thee—beware of him, provoke him not, &c. for my name is in him.*

Query VIII. Are there not other Scriptures that express evidently both a divine and a human nature in our Lord Jesus? as *Rom.* ix. 5, "Christ of the seed of David after the flesh," and yet he is *over all, God blessed for ever;* 1 Tim. iii. 16, *God manifest in the flesh,* who was *seen of angels,* and *received up into glory.* Rev. xxii. 13, 16, *The Beginning and the End, the First and the Last—the root and the offspring of David.*" John i. 1, 14, *The Word,* who *was with God, and* who *was God —was made flesh, and dwelt among us.*

Query IX. May there not be such a close and intimate union or oneness between God and a creature, as that the actions and characters of either of them may be attributed to the whole compound being? And may not this lay a foundation for such divine expressions concerning Christ? *viz.* that he is *Jehovah;* the *great God; over all, God blessed for ever; Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever;* and *let all the angels of God worship him;* which are characters belonging to the true God: And yet concerning this same person Jesus Christ, is it not said also, he ate, drank, slept, walked, groaned, and died, which are characters belonging to man?

Query X. May not this intimate union or oneness between God and a creature, give occasion for the actions and properties of the man to be attributed to God? And may we not this way account for such expressions as these: Acts xx. 28, *God hath purchased* the church *with his own blood.* 1 John iii. 16, God *laid down his life for us. God manifest in the flesh,* was *received up into glory,* 1 Tim. iii. 16?

Note. This figure of speech, whereby the peculiar attributes of one nature are ascribed to another, is called "a communication of properties:" And it is usual in all languages, and in all nations, when two distinct beings are united into one common principle of action. So we say of a wise woman, "she is a prudent body;" so of a drunkard, that "he is a thirsty soul." We often call a witty or skilful man, "an ingenious headpiece;" and we give the name of "a sleepy soul" to a sluggard; because soul and body being united compose a man, therefore some property of body is oftentimes attributed to the soul, and some property of soul attributed to the body.

Query XI. Is not this a more natural, more easy, and more scriptural method of accounting for the attribution of divine names and properties to our Lord Jesus Christ, than for us to take the peculiar and distinguishing names, titles, characters, and properties of godhead, which are applied to Christ, and sink them to a diminutive and inferior sense, and thus apply them to the man Christ Jesus? Would not every reader, even a Turk or an Indian,* readily believe these names and characters to be incommunicably

* I will allow the author of the *Sober Appeal to a Turk or an Indian,* to have given as fair a gloss to his construction of those Scriptures in another sense, as any writer has done: But in several places it is evident with how much difficulty and hardship those texts are strained to any other meaning than what the trinitarian writers have generally given them. Where the gloss of that author is fairest, and most likely to prevail on readers, it shall be considered in some future papers, if the present Essays are well received by the world.

divine, and appropriate only to the great God, if they did not read them applied also to Jesus Christ? And would they not rather choose to account for this application of them by the personal union of the man Jesus Christ to the divine nature, than by denying these characters to be appropriate to God? Is it not more rational and more scriptural to suppose the man Christ, by his union to God, capable of these names and characters in their sublime and exalted sense, than to run counter to so many places of Scripture, which at least seem to appropriate these names and characters to God.

Query XII. Does it not tend to take away the distinction between God and his creatures, which ought always to be sacred and inviolable, if we make such names and characters as "Jehovah, the great, the mighty, the blessed God, the Creator, the preserver of all things, and the object of worship," to be attributed and applied to any thing that is not God? Or if we sink them into a low and diminutive sense, in order to make such an application of them? Is a "mere distant resemblance of God in some of his properties, or a being appointed under God a deputy governor of the world, a sufficient reason to have all these glorious and incommunicable divine titles, characters, and worship attributed to a mere creature?

Query XIII. Would not such an attribution of divine names, titles, and characters, to a mere creature, have a plain and strong tendency to introduce a polytheism and idolatry, too near akin to that which is often condemned among the heathens, *viz.* the owning and worshipping heroes, departed souls, inferior and superior gods? Would it not have an apparent aspect of "God's giving his name and his glory to another," contrary to *Isaiah* xlii. 8. And has it not a manifest and dangerous appearance of breaking the first commandment, which says, *Thou shalt have no other gods before me?* Is not Christ Jesus in the arian scheme represented as another and an inferior god? Another and an inferior object of worship? Nor do I see how it is possible, upon that hypothesis, to answer what the learned Dr. Waterland has urged so often, and so successfully, against his opponents, *viz.* "That the arian writers, by their hypothesis, introduce more gods than one."

Query XIV. As the holy Scripture leads us into this method of solving the proposed difficulty, of both divine and human properties ascribed to Christ, so does not reason itself dictate and confirm the same? Since we find two distinct and seemingly inconsistent properties ascribed to the person of Christ, *viz.* divine and human, is it not far better to suppose the single subjects of these properties united into one compound subject, *viz.* God and man? And then each single subject may keep its own properties. Is not this easier than to join two inconsistent properties in the same single subject, which Scripture doth neither necessitate nor encourage, and philosophy and reason will not allow?

Query XV. Since the modern refiners of the arian scheme have granted, that there is a peculiar, strict, and perfect union and communion between the Father and the Son, and cannot deny but that several of the texts I have cited, may have a secret reference to some mysterious incomprehensible instances of union and communion between them (see Dr. Clarke's *Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity*, Part I. Numbers 594 and 600); where is the inconvenience or difficulty of allowing this to be called a personal union, whereby what is proper to God may be attributed to Christ, and what is proper to the man Christ may be attributed to God, and what is proper to either part of the compound person may be applied to the whole? Thus *God manifest in the flesh* was *seen of*

angels, and " ascended to heaven," may signify the same as that Jesus Christ, or the man united to godhead, was " seen of angels, and ascended to heaven ;" 1 Tim. iii. 16.

SECTION III.

Suppose a person, who had before indulged the arian error, and denied the proper divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, should by these steps of inquiry be led on thus far, to believe that Christ is called *God*, *Jehovah*, *the great God*, and *the blessed God*, in the true, proper, and exalted sense, he might yet be led farther onward into this doctrine, and quickly learn how to explain, in clear ideas, several other propositions which are asserted and maintained in the orthodox scheme, that is, in the common explication of the Trinity, *viz.* how the Son of God may be also God of one substance, power, and eternity, or of the same substance, with the Father, and in some sense equal with him in power and glory. And it may be explained also by this means, how Christ becomes the Son of God by an ineffable communication of the divine nature to him from the Father, and thus he may be the image of the invisible God, and the express image of his Father's person ; thus also all the divine characters which are ascribed to Christ in the New Testament, may be properly said to be derived from the Father. Observe the following method :

1. If the essence of God which is in the Father, and in the Son Jesus Christ, be the same numerical essence,* then it is evident that the Son hath the same substance with the Father.

2. If the perfections that belong to that divine essence are equal or the same in the Father and in the Son, then there is a sense wherein the Father and Son may be said to be equal in power and glory ; though the Father may be properly said to have them originally, and the Son by communication.

3. The divine nature, or deity, may be said to be communicated to Jesus Christ the Son, by the Father's uniting the human nature of Christ to his own godhead, or to some divine power or principle of agency represented personally or by God's actually assuming the man Christ Jesus, his Son, into a personal union with himself, or his own infinite wisdom, which act of uniting the godhead to the man Christ Jesus may be called a communication of the divine nature to the Son.†

* It is generally granted by the greatest and best trinitarian writers, that supposing we believe the Father, Son, and Spirit, to be really, truly, and properly, one God, the particular manner of explaining the internal distinctions in the divine essence is of much less importance. Upon this concession I take leave to say, that though the doctrine of the same numerical essence belonging to the sacred Three, has been opposed by some learned and pious writers, yet this is the opinion which is certainly most consonant to the light of nature, which has been for many centuries past counted the orthodox doctrine, and which seems most agreeable to the unity of God, where that is represented in Scripture, and therefore I rather incline to believe it: And I think the personal representations of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, may be explained in a full consistency therewith, as I shall endeavour to shew hereafter.

Here let it be noted also, that the divine nature of Christ is sometimes taken inadequately for the eternal word or wisdom of God, sometimes adequately for God exerting or acting by his eternal word or wisdom, or godhead under the special idea of wisdom. Now it is chiefly in this latter sense that I speak of the godhead of Christ in these three Dissertations.

† Though it has been an opinion generally received, that the sonship of Christ belongs to his divine nature, supposing it to be really derived from the Father by eternal generation, yet the Scripture does no where assert this doctrine, but it is drawn only by supposed consequences : And there are many zealous trinitarians and learned writers in our day, who suppose no derivation of one person from another in pure godhead, lest it infer some inferiority in the person derived; and therefore they explain Christ's sonship rather to signify the peculiar derivation of his soul and

4. And perhaps this is one way whereby Christ becomes *the Son of God:* nor is it utterly improper to apply the text here, Psalm ii. 7, *I will declare the decree; the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.* Christ becomes the Son of God, and may be said to be begotten of the Father by a divine decree or appointment. And thus, *as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself,* John v. 26. That is, he hath given the favour of union with the divine nature to the man Christ Jesus; and to have life in himself is one property of the divine nature,* which now exists in the complex person.

5. Thus Jesus Christ, the Son of God, becomes the most perfect image of the invisible God, *the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person.* The powers and perfections with which the man Jesus is invested, by the indwelling and united godhead, would render him a most illustrious image of the Father, if there were no superior sense in which also he were the express image of God; for there is no being through which the godhead shines in all its perfections with such brightness, such express likeness, and such glory, as in the person of Jesus Christ. 2 *Cor.* iv. 6.

6. Yet farther, if we can receive the doctrine of the pre-existence of Christ's human soul, which seems to be the most obvious and natural sense of many Scriptures, if we can believe that it was formed the first of creatures before the foundation of the world, and was present with God in the beginning of all things, which is no hard matter for an arian to grant, then we may also justly believe this union between God and man to have begun before the world was, in some unknown moment of God's own eternity: For when the human soul of Christ was first brought into existence, it might be united in that moment to the divine nature.

Thus Christ was, in this sense also, the first-born of every creature. For his complex person had a being before the creation was formed; and perhaps this may be the best way of expounding the doctrine of the most primitive fathers concerning the ante-mundane generation of Christ, that is, his becoming the Son of God in a new manner just before the world was made. See *the Fourth Dissertation, On the Logos.*

According to this view of things, it is easy to understand how he had some hand in the creation as God-man,† that is, as Jesus Christ, by whom *God created all things,* Ephes. iii. 9: How *all things were created by him, and for him, and by him all things consist,* Col. i. 16: And he *upholds all things by the word of his power,* Heb. i. 3. For he was God-man from the beginning of his existence as man. Thus divine perfections always belonged to him; his godhead was co-essential and co-eternal with the godhead of the Father, for it was the same divine essence; and his person as God-man existed before the foundation of the world.

body from God the Father, or his being constituted the Messiah by the decree and appointment of God; and Doctor Thomas Goodwin also supposes, "that the union of the man Jesus to the divine nature, is one reason why he is called *the Son of God.* It was by the personal union, that God bestowed on the man Jesus the glory of being his Son." Volume II. Book III. Page 146.

* This is not so bold a thought as Doctor Goodwin has on this text, when he says, "It is one attribute of Christ as he is God-man, yea, as he is man taken up into that union, to have life independently in himself, even as God the Father hath." Volume II. Book III. Page 193.

† Doctor Thomas Goodwin does at large maintain and prove, that "Christ, as God-man, created all things, and under this character he was the instrument by which God created the world." See his *Discourse of the Knowledge of God and Christ,* Book III. Chapters, X. XI. XII. Pages 178, 190.

These glorious attributions, by this means, appear to have a just foundation in the divine and human natures of Christ united, even without entering into any of the particular and internal distinctions and personalities which belong to the divine essence itself, and which are more abstruse and incomprehensible; and therefore they are not the first and most necessary things to be taught or learned in the doctrine of the Deity of Christ.

Lastly. The human soul of Christ being thus anciently united to the divine nature, did, about seventeen hundred years ago, assume " a body that was prepared for it by the Father, through the peculiar operation of the Holy Spirit." Upon this account sometimes Christ, or the Son of God, is said to " come in the flesh;" at other times God himself is represented as " manifest in the flesh;" some expressions referring chiefly to the godhead, others to god-man, or the soul of Christ in ancient union with his divine nature.

SECTION IV.

Now if by such methods of reasoning, a disbeliever of the proper divinity of Christ shall be induced to believe his true godhead, by virtue of such a personal union between the man Christ Jesus, and the divine nature, I cannot but think there is a just foundation laid for a ready belief of all the glorious consequent doctrines of the priesthood and kingdom of Christ; and of the proper and perfect satisfaction of Christ offered to the infinite Majesty of heaven for all the infinite offences of sinful men. Our blessed Saviour, by this doctrine, is furnished with all those divine powers and perfections that are requisite for his exaltation to the government over all things, since in his person there is the true and eternal godhead united to the man Jesus: And he becomes hereby the proper object of divine worship, considered in his person as God-man. And whosoever shall believe and confess this doctrine, has, in my opinion, a sufficient degree of orthodoxy in this point to be received into any christian church, although he may have some scruples or difficulties remaining upon his mind, about some opinions relating to other parts of the doctrine of the Trinity.

The most natural and pressing objection which here would arise in the mind, is this: " If the divine nature, or true God, be but one single conscious mind or spirit, and this spirit be united to human nature, or the man Jesus, then does not God the Father seem to be incarnate? Is there not too great an approach made to that doctrine which was called the heresy of the Sabellians, or the Patripassians, *viz.* that God the Father took flesh, suffered, died, and rose again, and ascended to heaven? To this I answer,

Answer I. If the sonship of Christ be not referred to his divine nature, but rather to the extraordinary production of his human nature, or to its personal union with the godhead, or to his office as Messiah, then the name of Father will not import any internal real distinction in the divine nature or essence,* but rather it imports an honourable title or character which the great God assumes, upon the account of his being

* That the notions of paternity and sonship are not necessary internal distinctions of the divine essence, but rather economical, external, and relative, seems to be the sense of some learned trinitarians. " Though these three are in the holy Scriptures spoken of under the names of *Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*, and as begetting, begotten, and proceeding; yet still we leave it to those who are wiser, or at least more bold and daring, than we, to say that this does, and to shew afterwards how it does, relate to the divine essence: For we have no notion of a greater or lesser in the godhead." See *Doctrine of the Blessed Trinity*, by some London Ministers, page 21.

the origin of all things, or his being the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ as man, or his constituting him God-man and Mediator.

The Father is also a proper name which belongs to God, considered as sustaining the character of prime agent in all the works of creation, providence, government, and salvation. But when this godhead is considered in its union to a man, and as part of the complex person, then it does not assume to itself these supreme characters, nor the title of Father in the Trinity; and being joined to the man Christ Jesus, it may receive those characters of office and inferiority which belong to a Mediator, as well as it renders the person of Christ God-man fit to sustain these offices.

In this view, although Christ Jesus the Son be united to the same godhead, which is the very essence and nature of the Father, yet it cannot be said properly that he is personally united to the Father, because this union to human nature, though it does not diminish any thing of the divine perfections, yet it alters the relative titles and characters that belong to God, as he appears the Father of all things, the sovereign Majesty, the prime almighty Creator and supreme Governor of heaven and earth.

The similitude which I have used in *The Christian Doctrine of the Trinity*, Proposition XVIII. would set this in a fair light, if I may repeat part of it again, *viz.* Suppose a king should send an ambassador extraordinary to a foreign country; and suppose the soul of the king himself, or one of his intellectual powers, could be so united also to the body, or person, of the ambassador, as to animate, actuate, and move him, and become, as it were, one person with him: Then the soul of the king himself might be said to sustain both his own character as king, and the inferior character of the ambassador, and fulfil both those offices under a distinct sort of personality, or in two distinct persons.

Thus we may apprehend how God the Father, the king of heaven, sent down his Son, a distinct person, in whom the same godhead dwells, as an ambassador extraordinary, to earth. And thus this eternal godhead being the same in the Father and Son, sustains the superior character of a sovereign king, in the person of the Father, and may be said also to sustain the inferior character of an ambassador, and to fulfil that office, in the person of the Son.

We must not expect human similes should be entire and perfect images of things divine: If they give us some illustration of sacred mysteries, it is sufficient.

The holy Scripture seems to favour this representation, when it describes the godhead, or sometimes even the Father, as subsisting in the man Christ, and executing all his three offices of a prophet, priest, and king, in and by the human nature.

1. A prophet; John xiv. 10, *The words that I speak unto you, I speak not of myself; but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works;* that is, "it is the same God, who is sometimes called Father, that speaks in me, and confirms the words by miraculous works."

2. A priest; 2 Cor. v. 19, *God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself;* that is, "God in the person of Christ was the reconciler of the world to himself in the person of the Father."

3. A king, or lawgiver; 1 Thess. v. 18, *In every thing give thanks; for this is the will,* or command, *of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.* God in Christ is our commander.

Thus it is the same God, who at other times sustains the person of the Father, dwelling personally in the man Jesus his Son, who assists him in all the works of mediation, so far that it may be said God performs them; and thus *God laid down his life for us*, 1 John iii. 16; and God redeemed the church with his own blood," *Acts* xx. 28. It is that God who was *manifest in the flesh*, 1 Tim. iii. 16.

Thus you see how far we may go toward the solution of this difficulty, before we come to distinguish three persons in the very essence of God. And I cannot avoid remarking, that all these thoughts put together, do naturally lead one rather to incline to this opinion, that the godhead of the Father and of the Son are numerically one and the same godhead, however internally and externally distinguished by personal subsistencies and relative properties. And this is the constant idea that our protestant divines, abroad and at home, have given us of the deity of Christ, *viz.* as the same numerical godhead which is in the Father.

Answer II. But, perhaps, this will not be thought sufficient entirely to answer and remove the difficulty: I add therefore, that if we suppose there may be some such, or greater, distinctions in the divine nature itself, or in God the infinite Spirit, as are between the understanding and will in the soul of man, which is a finite spirit, I have shewn very particularly, in another discourse, how one of these divine powers, or differences in the divine nature, may be united to man in such a sense as the other cannot so properly be said to be united to him; and for this I must desire the reader's patience, till I see whether the world will encourage further publications on this subject.

CONCLUSION.

Lest I should be exposed to the censure of my zealous friends, for not speaking so largely, fully, and particularly, in this dissertation, concerning the three sacred persons in the Trinity, Father, Son, and Spirit, as I have done elsewhere, I entreat them to consider the design of this discourse, which is not to explain this article at large, but merely to lead an arian, by soft and easy steps, into a belief of the divinity of Christ: And therefore it was necessary that I should not break in upon his understanding all at once, and attempt to assault and batter down all his old sentiments; but that I should explain the doctrine in as near a correspondency to his former sentiments as truth would permit, and represent the deity of Christ, and the union of the two natures in one person, in such a manner as might give the least disgust and offence to one of arian principles,* provided always, that I assert nothing but what is agreeable to Scripture, though I do not at once publish the whole of that doctrine in all its varieties. It would be a good beginning to proceed thus far; time and study of the Scripture, with divine instructions, may lead him on to farther knowledge, and a more complete agreement with our best writers, so far as they agree with the word of God.

Our blessed Saviour bore with the prejudices of his own disciples for a season; he

* That great defender of the divinity of Christ, Dr. Waterland, will bear me out in this manner of writing; for he freely declares, " He does not find fault with the fathers for adapting their style sometimes to pagans, but commends them rather for doing it in some cases, as doing what was proper." See his *Farther Vindication of Christ's Divinity*, &c. page 17. And St. Paul practises the same thing, and becomes *all things to all men*, even to Jews and heathens, that " by all means he may save some," 1 *Cor.* ix. 22.

had " many other things to say to them, even at the end of his life, but they could not bear them yet," *John* xvi. 12. And the blessed apostles bore with the prejudices of the Jews many years, and did not all at once beat down their whole scheme of mosaic principles. When St. Paul taught the Corinthians, he " fed them with milk and not with meat, for they were not able to bear it," 1 Cor. iii. 2. And when he found the Hebrews backward to hear, he reserved till afterwards the many things which he had to say, and which were *hard to be uttered,* Heb. v. 11, 12.

The servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves, 2 Tim. ii. 24, 25; as well knowing, that it is by short and gentle steps, and by slow degrees, that human nature is capable of dropping its former prejudices, parting with any of its old opinions, and receiving further light. I am well persuaded, that disputes regulated by christian love, and under the conduct of sacred charity, are in their own nature most proper to rectify the unwilling mistakes of men; and if ever the Spirit of God condescend to bless any controversial writings for the conviction of those that are in error, it is the soft and gentle method of argument that stands fairest to receive such divine influences.

DISSERTATION II.

GOD AND MAN UNITED IN THE PERSON OF CHRIST.

As it is evident throughout all the Scripture, so it is agreed on all hands, that our blessed Saviour Jesus Christ is a proper person, and is so described in the word of God. He has all the peculiar characters of personality belonging to him; he is a distinct intelligent agent; and the personal pronouns, *I*, *thou*, and *he*, are applied to him with great frequency in the holy writings.

It is also as clear in itself, and agreed upon without controversy on all sides, that he has the true and proper characters, attributes, actions, and passions of man attributed to him: The history of his life and death bear witness to this in all the evangelists.

It is also very evident to me, and has appeared so to almost all the christian church, in the several ages of it, that the names, titles, peculiar properties, and incommunicable prerogatives of God, are given to this glorious person in the Scriptures both of the Old and New Testament.

It is very hard, if not impossible, for us to give any tolerable account how and why the peculiar and appropriate characters both of God and of man, in so many places, and in such variety of expressions, should be given to the same person, Jesus Christ, unless we suppose the two distinct natures, of God and of man, united to make up one complex or compound principle of action and passion, that is to make up one person.

The holy Scripture lays an evident foundation for this. Christ is plainly described in several of the sacred writings as God and man united to make up one person, one complex principle of action and passion. He is often called God, and he is often called a Man, both in the Old and New Testament; and sometimes both these natures are represented together: Col. ii. 9, *In him dwelleth all the fulness of the godhead bodily.* Rom. ix. 5, "Christ of the seed of David after the flesh," and yet he is *over all, God blessed for ever.* 1 Tim. iii. 16, *God manifest in the flesh*, who was *seen of angels—received up into glory.* Rev. xxii. 13, 16, *The Beginning and the End—the First and the Last—the root and the offspring of David.* John i. 1, 14, *The word* who *was with God, and* who *was God—was made flesh and dwelt among us.* It is upon the account of this union, that both human and divine properties and characters are attributed to him in the Bible.

In opposition to this, it has been objected, "That in the passages of Scripture mentioned in my book of "*The Christian Doctrine of the Trinity*, there is not the least hint of two intelligent agents united in one person."—*Sober Appeal*, page 144.

Answer. I would let the reader judge, whether in the passages which are there mentioned, page 337, as well as in the texts I have now cited, there is not much more than a mere hint of two such intelligent agents united? It seems to me to be the very language of Scripture. But if the two natures of Christ were not expressed so plainly as they are, and connected and united in the same texts, yet there are so many different characters applied to Christ, which necessarily require two such intelligent agents, one divine and one human, that the inference appears very obvious and unavoidable, that God and man are united in the person of Christ.

Let us look into ourselves a little, and inquire, Why we believe man to be a compound being, a creature or person made up of an animal body and a rational spirit? If we would speak as philosophers, the only reason why we believe it is, because we find some powers, properties, and operations, belong to us, which cannot belong to a mere animal, or a body of flesh and blood; such as thinking, reasoning, doubting, reflecting, designing, repenting, wishing, &c. And we find also other ideas, operations, powers, and properties, which cannot belong to a spirit; such as corporeal qualities, dimensions, figure, local motion, tangible, impenetrable, and solid substance, eating, drinking, walking: From these things put together, we infer, that since one single nature is not capable of all these properties and operations, therefore the person of man is made up of two distinct natures, *viz.* a body and a spirit.

Now it is the same diversity of appearances, and the same reasoning, that persuade us to believe the person of Christ is made up of two natures, divine and human: And the Scripture seems to account for these things the same way.

It is objected again, That " the author of *The Christian Doctrine of the Trinity, &c.* hath defined the word *person*, in the common language of men, to signify one single, intelligent, voluntary agent, or principle of action; therefore according to the common sense and language of mankind, here are two persons in Christ, as well as two natures; and therefore the author will not say, that he uses the word *person* here in a sense near akin to the common sense of the word."—*Sober Appeal*, page 140.

Answer. Yes, the author may venture to say, he used the word *person* here in a sense near akin to its common sense: And I gave particular notice, page 327, that " though the word *person* may be fitly used and applied to the doctrine of the Trinity, yet we generally suppose it is not to be taken exactly in the same sense as when we call three men, or three angels, three distinct persons." Now what is not exactly the same sense, may yet be a sense near akin. And if in explaining things divine, we use the same word to include a little more, or a little less, than in things human, I think this may be done without blame, since we give notice of this special use of the word, since it is the best word we have, and it is that which comes nearest to the divine or sacred ideas which we would express.

The word *person*, in the common sense of it, signifies one single, intelligent, voluntary agent. But in this theological sense it is supposed to signify one complex, intelligent, voluntary agent; and thus the two natures of Christ, divine and human, may be called *one person.* In order to explain this in a very near approach to the common forms of human language, I would propose the few queries following:

Query I. May not two distinct substances, such as a body and a spirit, be so intimately united, as that the one may act in subordination to the other, and they may both be esteemed. by virtue of this union, as one common subject of action

or passion, or one complex principle of doing and suffering? And is not the whole being properly called *a person?* The common affairs and language of mankind, who are composed of a spirit and a body, answer this query in the affirmative by daily and hourly experience.

Query II. In this instance, of a person composed of two distinct substances, is not that which is done or sustained by the one or the other substance, attributed to the whole complex being? If the body sleeps or walks, if the soul meditates, loves or fears, do we not say, "The man fears, loves, meditates, walks, or sleeps?"

Query III. In this complex being, or person, are not the actions, passions, or characters, of either part of the composition, sometimes attributed to the other in common language? Do we not frequently say and hear such sentences as these, *viz.* "Poor soul, how pale it looks! That tall thing is very silly. No wise body would have done so. This deformed figure here is a learned man. Somebody thought of me. A projecting brain. A thoughtful face. A witty head. An honest heart. A heavy soul. A warm spirit?" In each of which expressions some property of body is attributed to the soul, or some property of the soul attributed to the body.

This is what we call a communication of properties, and it is used in the sacred writings as well as human. Gen. vi. 12, *All flesh hath corrupted his way upon the earth;* when in truth it was the spirits of men had corrupted their way. Prov. xxvii. 7, *The full soul loatheth the honey-comb, but to the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet;* whereas hunger and fulness are really the properties of the body. 1 Thess. iv. 14, *Them that sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.* It is in truth, the body that sleeps, and the soul is brought from heaven with Christ to judgment; yet you find in the language of the apostle, this communication of properties.

Query IV. May not two intelligent agents, or two spirits, one of which is inferior to the other, be so intimately united, as that the one may generally act in entire subordination to the other, and under the influence of the other, so that they shall be esteemed as one common principle of action and passion? And may not what is done or sustained by one spirit, be sometimes attributed to the whole complex being, or sometimes to the other spirit, by reason of their most close and intimate union?

The union of the soul and body to make one complex being, that is, a man, which are two things so utterly distinct in their own natures, gives foundation enough for the union of two spirits into one complex principle of action, since kindred natures may better admit of closer union than natures so exceedingly different.

Query V. May not the personal pronouns, *I, thou,* and *he,* be applied to this whole complex being, especially in every instance wherein the inferior spirit acts in entire subordination to the superior? And as the word *person,* in common language, signifies one single, intelligent, voluntary agent, so may it not, in this instance, signify one complex, intelligent, voluntary agent? And thus the word *person* will appear to be used here in a sense near akin to the common ideas of it.

Query VI. Are there not many other words in human language which are used in this manner, that is, to signify either one single substance, or to signify one complex substance, made up of two or more single substances united?

We may borrow instances from corporeal unions. When two contiguous houses have mutual communication made between them by proper doors, and are inhabited by one

family, they are often called one house: They were two single houses before, now they are one complex house. So two trees may be planted close together, and if they are barked on one side, and bound to each other, by this union they will, as it were, grow into one, and we may with propriety call them one tree: Such instances are also common in twin-fruits, as apples, cherries,* &c.

We may borrow instances also from political unions. So the parliament of England and the parliament of Scotland, are united and made one parliament: Or those two single nations, which contain thousands of intelligent agents, may be united and made one nation, that is, one complex nation. So a man and his wife, who are two single natural persons, may be called one political person, for they are one person in the eye of the law, because what the one sustains, receives, or acts, is in many cases attributed to the other.

Now to apply these queries to the doctrine of two natures in the person of Christ:

Query VII. May not the great God, the infinite Spirit, think it proper to assume into union with himself a finite spirit, in so close and intimate a manner as is possible for two such spirits to be united to each other? And may they not be esteemed as one complex being, one complex principle of action and passion?

Query VIII. Whether this complex agent, made up of the human and divine natures, so intimately united, may not have the personal pronouns, *I*, *thou*, and *he*, in the singular number, applied to it, with a justness and propriety of speech, which pronouns are the distinguishing characters that human language has affixed to distinct persons?

Query IX. May not this union be properly called a personal union? Or, if we choose Greek words, a hypostatical union? And may not this lay a foundation for that figure of speech which is so exceedingly common in human language, *viz.* a communication of properties, when two different beings are thus united into one?

Query X. Though it be impossible for us to tell precisely and fully wherein the personal union consists, yet is it not sufficient for us to know that it is a nearer and more intimate union between the godhead and the man Jesus, than there is between God and any other creature within our notice? And that it is sufficient to lay a foundation for the attribution of the distinguishing properties, operations, and passions of the one to the other, or to the whole complex person?

Thus, though the saints are said to be "united to God," or to be "one with God," and to "dwell in God," and to have "God dwelling in them," yet we never find the peculiar properties, actions, and passions of God and of the saints, mutually attributed to each other, in that manner as the actions and passions, and peculiar properties of God and the man Jesus are; nor are they ever described as making one complex being or person; nor are the actions, passions, and peculiar properties of God and the saints attributed to any such complex being, or compounded person, made up of both.

Query XI. Whether the person, the complete person of our Lord Jesus Christ, may not therefore be properly described as the blessed God in personal union with a man, or as a man personally united to God? And whether this is not the most plain, easy, and natural way, of accounting for the human and divine titles and characters attributed to him? Is not this done without straining any of the expressions of Scripture from

* I would not have used similitudes of so low a rank to represent things sacred, if I could have found such proper resemblances among the higher ranks of being: But, as others have observed before, an iron key that opens a lock, is better than a golden one which will not open it.

their most proper ideas, and always allowing the divine titles and characters to signify the idea of true Deity, and the human characters to intend nothing superior to human nature?

Query XII. Whether, upon this principle, it may not be said, "Christ is God;" "Christ is man;" "He grew in wisdom and in stature;" "He knows all things," &c. referring to his two different natures, or the two different parts of his complex person? Upon this account, when we speak of God manifest in the flesh, may it not be properly said, "God was seen of angels, and he ascended into glory; Christ was of the seed of David after the flesh, and he was over all, God blessed for ever; God laid down his life for us; God purchased the church with his own blood?" &c. If what is true of one of his natures, be affirmed concerning his whole person, and sometimes concerning the other nature, this union of two natures in one person lays a plain foundation for it.

Objection. "Supposing this strange notion, of two intelligent agents making one person, we shall find some things so manifestly spoken of the entire person, as will effectually preclude this way of escape: As particularly, when our Lord says, *Mark* xiii. 32, that "he knew not the day of judgment:" For though it is allowed to affirm of the person what belongs to either nature, yet I fear it will be accounted no better than equivocation to deny of the person what belongs to either; for certainly if it belongs to either nature, it is true of the person which is supposed to be constituted of both natures. By the same liberty of speaking, might one not deny that Christ is God, meaning it of his human nature; and again, on the other hand, deny that Christ is man, meaning it of his divine nature? The same may be said concerning those places, where Christ says, "I can do nothing of myself," &c.—*Sober Appeal*, page 146.

Answer. This objection is pushed home with its utmost force by a very acute writer, Mr. Emlyn, in his *Humble Inquiry*, &c. And I would refer the reader to those answers which that excellent author, Mr. Boyse, has given it, in his *Vindication of the true Deity of Christ*, from page 94 to page 108, edition 3d, wherein the whole dispute on this subject is contained. There are also several other authors who have vindicated this text, *Mark* xiii. 32, from the inferences which the arian writers would draw from it, by such considerations as these:

I. Our Saviour speaks this under the character of a mediator, or a prophet commissioned by the Father, to reveal his will to men: Now, since he had it not in his commission to reveal the day of judgment, he speaks as though he knew it not, that is, it was not within the reach or extent of that knowledge which his Father commissioned him to communicate to men at that time, though in his divine nature he had in himself the knowledge of it. By the same reason our Lord might say, he could do nothing of himself, which he had not commission to do as Mediator.

II. That in this place Christ represents himself as the Son of man in the foregoing verses, *Mark* xiii. 26, and thereby he may be understood to distinguish his human nature from his divine, and to deny that he knew the day of judgment as he was man, or the Son of man. And it is certain, that our blessed Lord, in the days of his humiliation, often spoke of himself considered in his human nature abstracted from the divine, though the union was never dissolved: It was his proper work on earth to represent himself as man, rather than as God; for had the Jews known, *they would not have crucified the Lord of glory*, 1 Cor. ii. 8.

III. To this I would add, in the last place, That if the sonship of Christ does not

belong to his godhead, even when he is called *the Son of God*, but belongs rather to his office as Mediator, or to the derivation of his human nature, both soul and body, from God the Father, in a peculiar and extraordinary way; then wheresoever he is represented as a Son, whether as Son of God or Son of man, still his sonship is an inferior part of his character; and on this account we may expect many things asserted or denied concerning him, which cannot properly be asserted or denied concerning his supreme nature or godhead, which has nothing in itself so much derivative and dependent, as seems to be implied in the word *Son*.

Now, if we should allow the inference which the objector makes, *viz.* that "if our Saviour, in his whole complex person, should deny, concerning himself, those properties which he possesses in one of his natures, it would approach too near to an equivocation;" yet when he speaks of himself expressly in his inferior character, or in his inferior nature as a Son, or as Mediator, he may then expressly deny any divine and supreme property of himself, considered in his divine nature, without any shadow of such an imputation. Though he would not say Christ is not God, or Christ is not man, yet he might freely declare, that his divine nature is not man, or the Son of man is not God; and in the same sense "the Son can do nothing of himself," and "the Son of man knows not the day of judgment."

I was willing to answer this objection particularly, because it is generally supposed by the arian writers to be unanswerable, though it has diverted me too far from the subject of personality, which I was pursuing.

Perhaps it may be yet further objected here, against the unity of the person of Christ, that the human and the divine natures are still two persons, for they are two distinct intelligent agents, and the pronouns *I*, *thou*, and *he*, may be applied to either of them, considered apart.

Answer I. To this I answer, the same may be said concerning any of the foregoing instances that I gave of two substances united into one compound substance: So the complex house may be called two houses; and the complex tree be called two trees; and Great Britain may be called two nations; and a man and wife may be called two persons still: There is a sense in which they are two, though there is another sense in which they are one. But I think it is sufficient to denominate each of these examples one being, or to attribute unity to each of them, if one thing is frequently predicated or affirmed concerning each of these examples as a complex idea.

Nor can I see any thing so terrible or heretical in it, if we should suppose the human nature and divine nature of Christ, to be in some sense two distinct persons, as God and man, being each of them a single intelligent agent. I confess, the frightful sound of *Nestorianism* may reasonably forbid a man to indulge this language, because it will not be counted orthodox: But I know of no manner of injury done to the Scripture, to the sacred truths of the gospel, nor to the common schemes of explaining the Trinity, by such an allowance as this is. The Reverend Mr. Robert Fleming is positive in this point. See *Christology*, Book III. Chapter III. page 279. And the Scripture sometimes seems to speak of Christ as a distinct person in one of his natures, and as abstracted from the other, though it be not really separated.

Answer II. But yet I may add, that the common way of speaking, to which our divines have accustomed themselves, denies the human nature of Jesus Christ to be so

properly called a distinct person by itself, because it was never ordained to exist one moment separate from the godhead: And that therefore the complex idea of God-man, may with greater propriety be called a person, than the human nature alone. If I were engaged to support this notion, I might propose a parallel case to give some light to it, *viz.* an angel is called *a person*, because though it be but a single spirit, yet it was never ordained to exist in union with an animal body: And yet a human soul, which is one single spirit, is not so usually called *a person* in the separate state, because it is ordained to dwell in a human body; and upon this account the addition of a human body is many times reckoned necessary to complete the personality, or to make a human soul a complete person.

Answer III. If this difficulty could be solved no other way, we might correct the account which I have given of the word *person*, and include in it all the ideas which the learned Doctor Waterland has expressed in his definition, *viz.* "a single person is an intelligent agent, having the distinctive characters of *I*, *thou*, and *he;* and not divided or distinguished into more intelligent agents capable of the same characters." See *Second Vindication of Christ's Divinity*, Query XV. where he has set this definition of the word in a clear and easy light. Let it be noted here, that the Doctor accurately and judiciously uses the words *divided* and *distinguished*, not *divisible* and *distinguishable;* for the human and divine constituents of the person of Christ are really divisible into two such persons, but since their union they never were, nor shall be really separated and divided.

If after all it should be found that the Scripture, on some occasions, represents the divine nature of Christ as a person, and at another time speaks of the human soul as a person, either before or after its incarnation; and if in other places it describes the divine and human natures united as one person, I cannot see any inconsistency in all this; supposing that person be distinguished into single and complex, and into complete and incomplete: In one or other of these senses, the word *person* may be variously applied, without any force or strain put on the words of Scripture, and without any violation of the rules of human language.

I cannot but think the light in which I have here set this matter of the complex person of our Lord Jesus Christ, is sufficiently evident; and though, perhaps, we may not always agree about terms and names, and the use of the word *person*, yet the ideas which I have represented seem to be clear and distinct, and, perhaps, may give satisfaction to those who are not inclined to dispute about words and names. If a further account of the use of the term *person* in this controversy be desired, see *Dissertation the Sixth.*

And since it may bear a dispute, whether the word *person* be ever used in this sense in Scripture, it shall never be a matter of zeal and contest with me, whether another man will express these ideas in my words or no; provided he will but acknowledge such a peculiar union between the human and divine natures in Christ, as sufficiently qualifies him for all the honours and offices of his mediation, and lays a foundation for attributing to him the appropriate and peculiar titles, characters, and operations, both of God and man. *To him be glory and dominion, for ever and ever. Amen.*

DISSERTATION III.

THE WORSHIP OF CHRIST, AS MEDIATOR, FOUNDED ON HIS GODHEAD.

IT is an unhappiness to the christian church, that there should be any controversies raised about matters of so sacred importance, as the worship which is paid to our blessed Saviour. It is agreed now-a-days on all hands, that both God the Father and his Son Jesus Christ are the proper objects of religious worship; but the chief dispute lies here, whether the worship that is paid to both of them be properly divine or no? And, whether our Saviour be the object of our worship, merely as a glorious creature, whom the Father has thus dignified, or as he himself has proper communion with God the Father in the divine nature, and is one God with him? That is, Whether true and proper godhead, or an inferior exalted character, be the proper foundation and ground of the worship that is paid to him?

I have read, with some diligence and care, what the author of the *Sober Appeal*, and others, even the most ingenious of the modern antitrinitarians have written on this subject, where they endeavour to prove, that religious worship, under the New Testament, is not so peculiar a prerogative of the supreme God, but that it may be given to our Lord Jesus Christ, though he be, in their sense, but a mere exalted creature; and that the New Testament requires religious worship to be paid to him as such. After all, I cannot see sufficient reason to abandon my former argument on this head, which I have published in my *Christian Doctrine of the Trinity;* though, perhaps, I may take an advantage from this study, to correct some of my sentiments, while I endeavour to guard and defend the most important of them.

In the pursuit of this subject, I shall attempt to establish the common protestant doctrine of the worship of Jesus Christ, the Mediator, upon the foundation of his godhead, and answer the most considerable objections I have met with in any of those writers.

The method I shall take in this discourse, is to lay down several successive propositions, to support the argument for the divinity of Christ, drawn from the payment of religious worship to him, and then shew, that divine or religious worship may be paid to him as Mediator, even though the man Jesus is a part of the complex person of the Mediator who is religiously worshipped.

Proposition I. "Worship is some peculiar honour or respect paid to an intelligent being, either real or imaginary."

The word *worship*, in old English, was used for honour in general, whether this be paid by the body or the mind, or both: An inward esteem or respect for any being may be called worship, though this word frequently implies also some external forms of bodily reverence, such as bowing, kneeling, or prostration.

It is also supposed to be paid to an intelligent being; for though the heathens worshipped stocks and stones, and the papists pay a sort of worship to the relicks of the saints, and to their images, yet it is always built upon this supposition, that there is some god, or some inferior spirit or power that dwells in these images, or attends and takes notice of the respect that is paid to themselves, by the means or medium of the image, relick, or other material being; unless, in some cases, idolaters have been so stupid as to imagine the wooden idol itself had acquired intellectual powers.

Proposition II. "Human or civil worship, is that human honour which is paid to any of our fellow-creatures on earth, upon the account of some excellency which a man may possess, or some special relation or character which a human person may sustain."

This sort of worship is given to knights, baronets, and several societies of men in our nation. This kind of worship was paid to king David, 1 Chron. xxix. 20, *They worshipped—the king*. And it is the same which may be supposed to be paid by the debtor to his lord, *Matt.* xviii. 26, "The servant fell down and worshipped his lord." So Christ tells the church of Sardis, he would make her adversaries "come and worship before her feet," *Rev.* iii. 9. And perhaps some, who knew not that Christ was God, might pay this sort of worship to him as a very extraordinary man, in the days of his humiliation.

Proposition III. "Religious worship is generally described to be divine honour paid to some superior being, on the account of some supposed divine excellencies and powers belonging to it."

I cannot boldly affirm, that all religious worship implies the absolute supremacy, the complete omnipotence, and sovereign godhead of the object of it, in the common sense of mankind. The heathens paid religious worship to inferior deities, and to household gods, whose power they did not imagine to be absolutely supreme; nay, they believed their influence to have a narrow and limited extent, though it was superior to human: But still they imagined it to be a sort of divine power, so far as it reached; and consequently the worship which they paid these inferior deities was divine worship. But God, in his word, has forbidden all this sort of worship to be given to any thing beneath and beside himself, as we shall see immediately.

Indeed, the learned Dr. Waterland, in his *First Defence of his Sixteenth and following Queries*, maintains, "that whatever has been, or may be, the sense of men, and their notions of worship, yet the great God has determined the meaning of religious worship in Scripture to include the divinity, supremacy, eternity, &c. of the object:" See pages 239, 240, &c. And has said several valuable things on this subject, worthy of a diligent perusal, and of great importance in this controversy. Our author, the Appellant, utterly refuses this account; "for," says he, "if religious worship imply the supremacy and divinity of the object, who will dispute it, whether it can belong only to the supreme God? But is not this plainly begging the question, and going in a circle?"—*Sober Appeal*, pages 122, 125.

But I ask leave to differ from his sentiment; nor can I think this is arguing in a circle, or begging the question; for if Dr. Waterland has proved that the sense of religious worship, in Scripture, always includes the proper godhead, the supremacy and eternity of the object of it, then by the proof of this sense he cuts off all other inferior senses of religious worship from the scriptural use of the word, and effectually maintains that

it must belong to God alone according to Scripture. And when the Appellant has again perused what this learned author has written, both in his First and Second *Defence of the Queries*, perhaps he may find that he has well vindicated the sole right of the supreme God to all religious worship; therefore I shall refer to his writings, rather than rehearse them here: That learned author stands in no need of my assistance to defend his arguments.

The Appellant gives us another idea of religious worship; for it seems to him, that "religious worship imports our expressing a dependence on, or making acknowledgment to some other being, as superior to man. There might be the same outward signs of this worship as of civil respect, such as bowing, kneeling, &c. And there might be the same immediate acts, as asking favours, returning thanks, &c. which, no doubt, are allowable between man and man, but all direct expressions of respect and homage to other beings, as of a superior nature, and having power over us, whether visible or invisible, I take to be properly religious worship. And this was forbidden absolutely under the Old Testament: This would have been accounted the worshipping another god, though they did not acknowledge the being they worshipped to be supreme, eternal, immutable, &c. which indeed, in most instances, could never be supposed."—*Appeal*, page 123, margin.

I cannot say, I am fully satisfied with this account of religious worship; for if an angel should bring me a message, or command from heaven, would it be unlawful to ask him to explain it by his superior knowledge? Or, to desire him to return again, and give me some help toward the performance of it? Or, to make a thankful acknowledgment to him for his angelical service and condescension to converse with me? I confess these things do not express a direct dependence on this angel in distinction from God, nor any acknowledgment of such a dependence on him, any further than merely as a divine messenger; and therefore these, perhaps, may not arise to this author's idea of religious worship.*

But, however, let us now take this idea of worship, which the Appellant himself has proposed, and state it thus more at large, and I think according to his meaning.

Religious worship is "honour more than human, paid to some being on the account of some supposed excellencies, or powers more than human, belonging to it, with an acknowledgment of our dependence on this being, and subjection to it." And now let us see, whether, according to his own description, my argument for the divinity of Christ, drawn from religious worship, will not stand upon firm and unshaken ground?

Proposition IV. "God has assumed religious worship to himself in his word, as his own peculiar prerogative, and with the severest penalties has forbid it to be paid to any inferior being."

It is not my business here to inquire, whether, in the abstracted nature of things, a mere creature be, or be not, capable of religious worship, that is, of some honours

* I acknowledge it is a more difficult, and a more important thing than I heretofore imagined, to ascertain the precise idea of religious worship. And since it seems manifest in Scripture, that it is appropriate to God, I take the liberty with my own writings, to retract that sentence in my book of the Trinity, page 350, "If there be any mere creature to whom I can communicate the knowledge of my wants, &c. the lights of reason and Scripture lead me to address him." And that sentence also, page 314, "The very reason of things leads us to adore him." And I give thanks to the Appellant, who has convinced me that these expressions are incautious and unguarded. Though according to the method of controversial writers, who seem to renounce all retractations, I might have a pretence to colour them over; But I choose to stand corrected.

superior to human, and yet inferior to divine? But it is evident, that God thought it the best way to secure his own divine honour, and to guard his people in all ages from idolatry, by forbidding all such religious honours to be paid to any mere creature whatsoever: And this he does in most general expressions, excluding all sorts, kinds, and forms, of religious worship whatsoever, and that in the most awful and solemn language, as a matter of the greatest importance. Exod. xxxiv. 14, *Thou shalt worship no other god; for the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God.* Deut. vi. 4, 13, 14, 15, *The Lord our God is one Lord.—Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and serve him, and shalt swear by his name. Ye shall not go after other gods—for the Lord thy God is a jealous God among you; lest the anger of the Lord thy God be kindled against thee, and destroy thee.* Deut. x. 20, *Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God; him shalt thou serve, and to him shalt thou cleave, and swear by his name: He is thy praise, he is thy God, that hath done for thee great and terrible things.* Deut. xiii. i. 2, *If a prophet shall say, Let us go after other gods and serve them;* it is interpreted, *verse* 5, "a turning them away from the Lord their God," *and that prophet shall be put to death.* And *verse* 6, &c. "If thy brother, thy son, thy daughter, or thy wife, thy friend, &c. shall say, Let us go and serve other gods, thou shalt stone him with stones that he die," for it is interpreted a "thrusting thee away from the Lord God." And *verse* 12, &c. "If a whole city shall agree to serve other gods, the inhabitants of that city shall be utterly destroyed with the edge of the sword, the city itself shall be burned with fire, and shall be a heap for ever." 1 Sam. vii. 3, *Prepare your hearts unto the Lord, and serve him only, and he will deliver you.* Hosea xiii. 4, *I am the Lord thy God from the land of Egypt, and thou shalt know no god but Me, for there is no other Saviour beside Me.* Psalm lxxxi. 9, 10, *There shall no strange god be in thee, neither shalt thou worship any strange god. I am the Lord thy God, &c.*

The first of the ten commandments, delivered with such solemnity upon mount Sinai, *Exod.* xx. 2, is this, *Thou shalt have no other gods before Me;* that is, no other objects of worship, upon which thou shalt have a religious dependence, or to which thou shalt pay religious honours.

Proposition V. "Religious worship is attributed to our Lord Jesus Christ, both in prophecy, in precept, and in example, in Scripture."

Psalm xlv. 11, *He is thy Lord, and worship thou Him.* Heb. i. 6, *When he bringeth in the first-begotten into the world, he saith, Let all the angels of God worship Him.* Rom. x. 13, *Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord,* that is Christ, *shall be saved.* Rev. v. 13, *Every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, &c. heard I, saying, Blessing and honour, and glory and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever.* Besides the account we have of the disciples, of Stephen the martyr, and of St. Paul, the last apostle, worshipping Christ, and praying to him; and the several doxologies that are paid to him, both in earth and in heaven, are sufficient proofs that religious worship is due to him; nor do any of the modern antitrinitarians deny it.

Proposition VI. "Thence we infer, that true godhead belongs to our Lord Jesus Christ;" or that he has such communion in the godhead of the Father, such an oneness with the Father in the divine nature, as renders him justly capable of religious or divine worship: For if religious worship be a peculiar prerogative of the true God, and Jesus Christ has religious worship paid to him, he must also be the true God.

Let us now consider what the objectors have to say in opposition to these three last propositions.

The Appellant and his brethren readily allow, that religious worship is, and ought to be paid to our Lord Jesus Christ; he allows also, that during the days of the Old Testament, religious worship was absolutely forbidden to be given to any creature. He seems hereby to allow what I have proposed as the meaning of the first command, *viz.* "That there should be no other object of religious worship but the Lord Jehovah, the one God of Israel."* But then he will not allow the inference, "That therefore Jesus Christ is the true God:" For if *god* signifies an object of worship, he supposes the first command is so far repealed under the gospel, as to admit another, even an inferior object of worship, *viz.* "our Lord Jesus Christ; as the fourth command in the decalogue is repealed, so far as concerns that seventh day which the Jews were required to keep as their sabbath."

Here the Appellant speaks his sentiments with freedom, in plain language, and confesses the necessity he is driven to, of supposing the first commandment to be in part repealed. He seems to be conscious that these words, *Thou shalt have no other gods*, no other Elohim, *before me*, exclude all other gods, both inferior and subordinate as well as supreme, beside the one Jehovah, the Lord God of the Jews. Nor can he account any other way for the worship of Christ as an inferior god, but by repealing in part the first commandment. Now to prove that the first command is not repealed, neither in whole nor in part,† I give these six reasons.

Reason I. The very grounds upon which this ancient command, of worshipping one God only, and the prohibition of other gods, is founded, abide the same under the gospel; and the reasons by which it was enforced under the Old Testament seem to remain the same under the New, *viz.* "his being the one God, the one Jehovah, the Eternal, the Almighty, the Creator of all things, his jealousy of his own honour, his deliverance of his people from bondage, his being the author of the salvation of his people, and his sovereign authority over them, with his all-sufficiency for their help and happiness." Now, is not God the same only Lord God, and one Jehovah, the same Eternal, Almighty, and Creator of all things? Is not God as jealous of his own honour under the gospel, as he was under the law? Is he not that Being who has delivered his people from spiritual bondage, which was typified by the land of Egypt? Is he not the same one God under the New Testament which he was under the Old? Is he not that God upon whom his people as much depend for deliverance and salvation? And therefore to admit another god under the New Testament to be the proper object of worship, seems to be as inconsistent with the unity, the holy jealousy, and the all-sufficiency of God, under the gospel, as it was in the days of judaism.

* That this is the true meaning of the first command, is evident from many places of Scripture; for wheresoever men set up any other object of worship, it is called, in scripture-language, "the setting up idols, or other gods," even though these idols were only designed to be the objects of mediate or subordinate worship; nay though they were only mediums of worshipping the true God; so Jeroboam's calves are called *other gods*, 1 Kings xiv. 9. 2 Chron. xiii. 8. Laban's images are called *gods*, Gen. xxxi. 30, which were probably the household gods of the family, *Joshua* xxiv. 2. Though by these Jeroboam, Nahor, and Laban, might ultimately worship the true God, as *Gen.* xxxi. 49, 53; whatever was honoured with religious worship, in scripture-sense is called *god*, and therefore in scripture-language, every thing but Jehovah, or the true and supreme God, is excluded from such worship by the first commandment.

† I see not, indeed, how it is possible for this first command to be repealed in any part, unless it be wholly repealed; for the form of it is negative, and thus it excludes any other god or gods whatsoever: Now if any other god be admitted under the New Testament, I think the whole command is repealed.

There are also several other expressions of the prophet Isaiah, and the other prophets, wherein God asserts his own unity, his own peculiar prerogative and right to religious worship, in opposition to all other gods, or other objects of worship, not only because he alone is the Creator of all things, but he alone is omnipresent, he alone knows all future things from the beginning; he alone is the Maker and Redeemer of Israel; he is the First and the Last, &c. Now the one true God has the same reasons to maintain his divine prerogative, and sole right to religious worship under the gospel; he alone is the omnipresent, the omniscient God, the Maker and Saviour of his people.

If it be objected here, that Christ is also represented as the Creator of all things, the Maker and Saviour of his people, &c. and therefore he may become an object of worship too, we readily allow it; because we suppose him to be one God with the Father, and therefore the ancient titles and characters of godhead belong to him, and render him justly capable of religious worship.

Reason II. If Christ or his apostles taught the Jews the worship of any other god or gods beside Jehovah the God of Israel, I question whether all their miracles, and their professed commission from heaven, could ever have justly gained them any credit with the Jews; whether they ought not to have been rejected by the law of God, according to that solemn declaration of God to Israel, and that universal rule which he gave them by which to examine and try all their succeeding prophets: Deut. xiii. 1—5, *If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, and the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods (which thou hast not known) and let us serve them: Thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams: For the Lord your God proveth you, to know whether you love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul: And that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams, shall be put to death, because he hath spoken to turn you away from the Lord your God.*

If it should be said here, that the reason why the offender is stoned, was not because he led them to other gods, but because he turned them away from the true God: I answer, that there is nothing of this kind mentioned in the description of the crime, *viz.* "a turning them away from the true God," but it is only brought in at the end of the law, to shew the malignity of the crime itself, and to make it appear that the teaching them to worship other gods, would be interpreted by the true God as a rejection of himself. And this is plain in several instances, when the Jews worshipped other gods and retained the worship of the true God still, yet they are charged with turning away from the Lord their God.

Upon this supposition therefore, that Christ or his apostles taught the Jews to worship another god or gods, which they had not before known, I would speak it with holy fear and caution, does there not seem to be a divine command to put them to death, whatsoever signs or wonders they produced to vindicate their commission? And thus, if they set up our Lord Jesus Christ, whom the Appellant allows to be called God in an inferior sense, and proposed him as another god, another object of religious worship, did they not hereby sap the foundations of all their own pretences to a divine commission, and seem to give the Jews, their countrymen, a right to stone them to death, according to their own law? And I humbly question whether all their miracles could have been a sufficient protection to them.

Let it be considered further, that when the Jews took up stones, to stone our Saviour,

they pronounced him worthy of death according to their law, for that "he being a man made himself God," *John* x. 33; whereas the words which our Saviour spake were these: *I and my Father are One*, verse 30. He doth not deny himself to be God, which seemed very necessary to be done at such an important juncture as this, if he had not been the true God; nor doth he declare himself to be a god different from the Father, which might have given the Jews a juster pretence to stone him; but his words are, *I and my Father are One*, which represent him to be the same God as the Father, or to be God by virtue of some personal oneness with the godhead of the Father.

Nor can I conceive how any thing else but the supposition of this doctrine could have so honourably vindicated our Saviour's conduct at this juncture, and at the same time have taken away all just pretence from the Jews for attempting to stone him: Since he did not preach up another god, his miraculous works obliged them to believe all that he said; and to these mighty works he appeals, *verse* 32. Whereas, if he had preached up himself as another god, that jewish law seems to stand in force against him notwithstanding his miracles.

I confess this thought has something in it very solemn and awful; it carries, in my esteem, very great weight with it, and confirms me in the belief, that Jesus Christ has communion in the godhead of the Father, and is in a proper sense the same God; otherwise I cannot see how he could be made an object of religious worship: For if he be God only in an inferior sense, then he is another god, and seems hereby to lie exposed to the condemnation of this sacred rule in *Deuteronomy*, this divine test of future prophets which Jehovah gave to Israel by the mouth of Moses. The learned Dr. Waterland is so positive on this head, that he asserts, "The worship of the same one God, exclusive of all others, is for ever made unchangeable by this text." *First Defence of the Queries.*

If it should be objected by an arian here, "That this, and all other prohibitions under the Old Testament, to worship any other god, must be construed with a particular relation to those false gods and idols of the heathen nations of which the Jews were in danger; but it must not be supposed, that God ever designed by such language to exclude from religious worship so glorious a being as his own Son, who can hardly be called a creature, though he be a distinct being, produced by the will and power of God, and of a nature inferior to the Father."

Answer I. The language of this prohibition is very general, it excludes all *Elohim*, god or gods, *which thou hast not known.* Now it does not appear from Scripture, that the Jews knew any true god besides "the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob," their only Jehovah: So that the word plainly excluding all gods that they had not known, seems for ever to exclude Christ from their worship, if he be not the same God with Jehovah, the God of Abraham, whom the Jews knew.

Answer II. How could the Jews ever imagine that there was such a limitation intended and implied in the general prohibition, when there is not any intimation of it in the books of Moses; nor indeed in any of the prophets? And since Jesus Christ, in the arian sense, was an unknown god to them, how could they ever come to the knowledge of him, or be assured that he is so glorious a being as the Son of God, and that he is appointed by the Father to be called *God*, and to be worshipped, except by the divine tokens of prophecy and miracle? How should they ever know that this supposed limitation of the

general and solemn prohibition of worship did not reach to exclude this person, but by some such divine testimonies? Now the force of these very divine testimonies, miracles, and prophecy, seem to be enervated and precluded in this single case, *viz.* the receiving any other god, or having any other object of worship. "In all other cases," as Grotius well observes, *De Veritate Religionis Christianæ*, "prophecy and miracle were constituted the criteria of an inspired person, and the Jews were bound to receive him; but in this one case of worshipping another god, these criteria were excluded by this very law or statute:" So that this law of having no other god seems to be confirmed to the Jews for ever.

If the objector should persist, and say that "there are intimations given us in the Old Testament, that the Messiah must be worshipped, when he comes, and that therefore the Jews would not be so much surprised at the proposal of another object of worship in the days of the Messiah:" To this I answer two ways:

Answer I. This seems to be a begging the question, and taking it for granted, that the Messiah is not the one true God in any sense, which is the present matter of debate.

Answer II. It should be observed, that in most of those places, wherein it is foretold that the Messiah should be worshipped with religious worship, his godhead is also intimated: Psalm xcvii. 1, *The* Lord [Jehovah] *reigneth, let the earth rejoice;* verse 6, *All the people see his glory;* verse 7, *Confounded be all they that—boast themselves of idols: Worship him, all ye gods,* or angels: Which verse is applied to Christ, *Heb.* i. 6. So *Psalm* cii. 15, where the kingdom of the Messiah is foretold, *the heathen,* or gentiles, *shall fear the name of the Lord;* verse 22, *The people are gathered together, and the kingdoms, to serve the Lord;* verses 24, 25, *Thou hast laid the foundation of the earth, &c.* which is also applied to Christ, *Heb.* i. 10. So Psalm xlv. 6, *Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever;* verse 11, *He is thy Lord, and worship thou him;* which is also applied to Christ in the same place. So again, Isaiah viii. 13, 14, *Sanctify the Lord of hosts himself, and let him be your fear and dread, and he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling, and for a rock of offence;* which, compared with *Isaiah* xxviii. 16. 1 *Peter* ii. 6, 7. *Rom.* ix. 33. *Matt.* xxi. 44, &c. shew that this is spoken of the Messiah: And several other Scriptures might be cited to the same purpose. So that still it seems to be the indwelling or united godhead, which is worshipped in the Messiah, and which gives the Messiah in his complex person a right to religious worship, as we shall see hereafter.

Reason III. Our blessed Saviour, in the beginning of his ministry, was tempted by the devil, to fall down and worship him; upon which occasion our Lord confirms the first commandment, and repeats and cites the words of the mosaic law: Matt. iv. 10, *It is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve;* Deut. vi. 13, and x. 20. And it is worthy our observation, what Doctor Waterland remarks here, that "the reason which Christ gives for refusing to worship him, is not that he was a bad spirit, an enemy to God, or that God had not commanded it; but because none are to be worshipped but God only.

It may be objected here, That our Saviour only means to appropriate supreme worship to God the Father, but he does not exclude himself, nor any other inferior being, from an inferior and subordinate worship, proper for subordinate beings, and that therefore subordinate worship may be paid to one who is not the true and eternal God.

I answer, that as all inferior and subordinate * worship of any mere inferior or subordinate beings, is acknowledged to be excluded under the Old Testament, by the mosaic law, so our Saviour's citation and repetition of it there, does most expressly and directly exclude mere creatures from subordinate worship as well as supreme; for the devil does not tempt him to pay supreme worship to himself, since he acknowledges that he is not the maker, nor supreme possessor of the kingdoms of the world; but he says only that these were delivered into his hands, and therefore he was capable of bestowing them upon Christ. As he therefore was but a subordinate possessor, he could demand but subordinate worship, which our Lord forbids by a citation out of the mosaic law; *Luke* iv. 5, 6, 7, 8.

Now in disputes on this subject, and this text, the unitarians seem to have found out but these two refuges, for which they have any colour or pretence:

1. "That notwithstanding the devil's own expression, that he received his kingdoms and powers from another hand, and that they were not originally his own, by supreme right, yet that he was so impudent and unreasonable in the same breath to desire divine worship." To which I answer, that as impudent and unreasonable as his requests may be at some times, yet in this place, the unitarians have no manner of proof that he requested supreme worship: And there is a rational probability of the contrary. It is most likely, that he desired such worship as the heathens were wont to pay to any of their deities besides the supreme, that is those deities into whose hands their supreme god had delivered the government of particular parts of the creation.

2. It is pretended that "Christ's prohibition of worshipping any thing besides the true God at this time of his temptation, was of no force after his own exaltation; and though God only was to be worshipped at that time, yet in three or four years afterwards, Jesus Christ also, being exalted, might have religious worship paid to him, though he were but an inferior being."

To this it is answered, that our blessed Lord, not only now, but afterwards, preaches the same doctrine; he takes other occasions, in the course of his ministry, to confirm that solid foundation of all religion, "that there is but one God, one object of worship." Now if he himself, or his apostles immediately after his resurrection, had been appointed to set up the worship of himself as a mere inferior being, and another god, it is not to be supposed that our Lord Jesus should have introduced his own ministry upon earth with so sacred a confirmation of the one only object of worship, in his repelling the temptation of the devil: Nor can we think he would have taken frequent occasion to maintain that doctrine and practice inviolable, and that without the least hint of any repeal of it.

So very important and considerable a change of religion as this, which repeals the first commandment, and admits another god to be owned and worshipped, would certainly have required a very particular and express account of it to be given to the Jews, and much labour to be spent in persuading them of the change of this great and

* When I speak of supreme and subordinate worship in this place, I would be understood with respect to the proper foundation of worship, and not with regard to the modes of worship, the motives designs, or particular forms of address; for in the Ninth Proposition I have shewn, that these may possibly be mediate or subordinate, even when God is worshipped under some subordinate character, though the foundation of worship is always supreme or proper divinity; and thither I refer the reader. See pages 315—321.

fundamental article of their faith and practice. *Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is one Lord, thou shalt have no god besides Him.*

Here if it be said, Christ gave some intimations of a repeal of it, when he speaks of his own future worship, and told them, that "all men must honour the Son, as they honour the Father," *John* v. 23; let us remember also, that he gave frequent intimations of his own communion in the godhead: For he said, *I am in the Father, and the Father in me; I and my Father are one;* John xiv. 10, 11; x. 30; and thus the first command abides in its full force still.

Reason IV. That religious worship is the peculiar prerogative of God alone under the New Testament, as well as under the Old, is further proved by the continuance of this precept in force after the resurrection and exaltation of Christ as well as before: For the apostle John was twice going to worship the angel, *Rev.* xix. 10, and xxii. 8, 9, the angel refused the worship both times, and said, *See thou do it not; I am thy fellow servant—worship God;* which must necessarily signify "worship God alone," or that "God only is the proper object of thy worship;" otherwise it could not exclude the worship of an angel. Now if God alone was to be worshipped after the full glorification of Christ, when God had appointed "every knee to bow to him," and when he was known and adored by the church as a proper object of worship, I think it is a very plain consequence that Christ is God; that he has a glorious communion in the divine nature with the one true God, the God of Israel, who was the only proper object of worship under the Old Testament, and is the same under the New.

Whether St. John mistook this angel for Christ himself, or whether he might incautiously, and on a sudden, attempt to pay too sublime a respect and honour to a mere angel, is much the same to my argument; for the angel forbids this honour to be done to himself, as being due to God alone; and this being the reason of his repeated prohibition, the same reason would also exclude Jesus Christ from worship, if he were not true God. And, perhaps, this redoubled occurrence and prohibition might be placed in the end of Scripture by divine providence, to let us see, that from the beginning of the Bible to the end of it, God alone is entitled to religious worship.

Reason V. The Jews had learned from the Old Testament, the worship of one true God, and him only; and there is scarce any command more frequently renewed, or guarded with more awful sanctions, and more terrible examples of the wrath of God against the breakers of it: Now if Christ, or his apostles, had so much as pretended any repeal of this law, the Jews would have had a most public and glorious pretence against Christianity. The doctrine of the worship of Christ, as a mere creature, would have raised in the heart of every Jew one of the most unconquerable prejudices against the gospel. Since the time that they smarted so severely in Babylon, by a captivity of seventy years, for their idolatries, they have been always observed to have the utmost aversion to every appearance of idolatry, or the worship of any thing beside the one true God: St. Paul testifies thus of his countrymen, *Rom.* ii. 17, 22, "Thou art called a Jew, and abhorrest idols." Now if the crucifixion of the Messiah was a stumbling-block to the Jews, which many of them could not get over, the worship of a man, an exalted creature would in all probability have been a much greater stumbling-block and impediment of their belief of the gospel. Their aversion to a crucified Messiah arose only from their own foolish traditions and pre-conceived errors; but their aversion to the worship of a man is patronised by all their sacred writings, for they could hardly

read any part of their Bible but they found some precept, threatening, or divine judgment, recorded against worshipping any creature, or receiving any other god.

It is evident in the writings of the apostles, that Jesus Christ is several times called God, and that he is worshipped. Now if he has not the same godhead with the God of the Jews, then he is another god, another object of worship; and when the Jews had smarted so terribly in all former ages for their worshipping any beside their own true God, and for their breach of the first commandment, it would appear like an immoveable and everlasting bar against their acceptance of the religion of Christ, if they had been told that this first commandment was now in some measure repealed, and that they must now admit of another god, even the man Jesus, and pay him religious worship, though he were but a creature.

Shall it be objected here, that "there were several parts of their religion repealed, namely, all their ceremonial law, which they seemed to be as fond of as any thing in their religion; and why might they not submit to a repeal of the first command also?"

But it may be answered, that there was sufficient evidence given of the repeal of the ceremonial law, by discovering to them, that all these were but shadows of the promised blessings of the Messiah; and consequently when the substance and glory of their religion appears in the reign of their expected Messiah, it is necessary that the shadows should vanish and disappear. So St. Paul argues in his Epistle to the Jews, or Hebrews. Even their sabbath itself, in the jewish forms of it, was a type of the blessed rest under the gospel, and of the final rest in heaven, as the apostle proves in the fourth chapter of that Epistle, as well as in *Col.* ii. 16, 17. But there is not the least intimation that the first commandment had any thing in it ceremonial or typical; nor can any such reason be given why that should ever suffer a repeal.

I add further, that the apostle not only gives a reason for it, but I think he declares in very plain language, that their laws of ceremonies are repealed, in the Epistles to the Galatians and Colossians, as well as the Hebrews; at least so far as not to be necessary: And I am well assured, that if the first command were to have suffered such a repeal, and to have admitted another god, there would have been as much, or more need of plain and express declarations of it by inspired men, because there seems to be so much more of natural reason for the continuance of this command, than there is, or can be, for any part of the ceremonial law.

It will be further inquired, "Then how came any of the Jews ever to be persuaded to receive Christianity, and to worship Christ, whom they knew to be a man, if they had such an utter aversion to every shadow of idolatry, and the worship of any thing beside the God of Abraham, their own true and only God?"

The answer is obvious here, for the apostles did not in their very first preaching require of them the religious worship of Christ, but by degrees led them into it. They first preached up the peculiar and extraordinary presence of God with the man Jesus, whereby he wrought miracles, as is evident, *Acts* ii. 22, and *Acts* x. 38, *God was with him.* Then they taught by degrees, that the "fulness of the godhead dwelt in him bodily," as *Col.* ii. 9; that the union between the true God and the man Jesus was so great, as that the actions and sufferings of Christ were attributed to God; that "God redeemed the church with his own blood," *Acts* xx. 28; that Christ was so far one with the true God, as that upon this account he is called *God manifest in the flesh, God over all, blessed for ever;* 1 Tim. iii. 16, and *Rom.* ix. 5. Thus the Jews themselves

might be led to the worship of Jesus Christ by the discovery of the same godhead dwelling in him, and united to him, whom they and their fathers were taught to worship by the law of Moses. Jesus Christ is the same God, or Jehovah, but now dwelling in flesh; and this they might prove out of many of their own prophets.

Reason VI. As the doctrine of worshipping another, an inferior god, would have been a just stumbling-block to the Jews against receiving Christianity, so it might have been fairly objected by the gentiles against the preaching of the apostles, when in their ministry they demolished the heathen gods and heroes.

The blessed apostles made it their business every where to inculcate the doctrine of the one true God, to call the heathens away from the worship of all their inferior deities, the souls of all their departed heroes, and all such as "are not god by nature," *Acts* xiv. 15, and xvii. 24. *Gal.* iv. 8, that they might no longer *serve them which by nature are no gods.* Now, how could they expect success in their reasonings with the heathens on this subject, if they introduced Jesus Christ as another god, as an inferior god, as one who by nature was no god, and proposed him to be their god, or the object of their worship, merely by the appointment of the supreme God? Would not this look like "building again the things which they had destroyed," if Jesus Christ had no such communion in the natural supreme and eternal godhead, as might render him a proper capable object of their religious worship, according to the general dictate of Scripture, that we must worship God alone? Would not this have a tendency to establish their old superstition and polytheism, rather than destroy it?

Let us suppose St. Paul had been just preaching up the unity of the true God to the Athenians or Corinthians, and forbidding them to worship any of these inferior gods, and the souls of departed heroes; let us suppose that he had fixed their faith upon the one true God, and appropriated their worship to him; and suppose in a little time after, he should teach them to call upon the name of the Lord Jesus, which doubtless he did to all his disciples, for the Christians were generally known by this character, *viz. All that call upon the name of the Lord Jesus,* 1 Cor. i. 2; what would the heathens say? "Did you not lately teach us the worship of the one true God, and bid us renounce our several departed heroes and inferior deities, and all other gods whatsoever? And are you already bringing in your departed hero, Christ, for a new inferior god among us?" I know not how the apostle could readily and clearly give a plain and satisfactory answer to them upon the arian principle. But if he should tell them Jesus Christ is not another god, for this man Jesus has the fulness of the true godhead dwelling in him, he is united to the one true God, and thereby becomes one with God, and upon this account may justly be worshipped. Such an answer of the apostle would stop their accusation, would make his own doctrine consistent with itself, would maintain the unity of the true God, and justify his demolition of their inferior deities.

I freely confess, that there is a real difference between the arian worship of Christ, and the heathen worship of their gods or heroes; because these are either fictitious, or at best have no such real power and authority as our Saviour is allowed to have even in the arian scheme. But it would be hard to make this difference appear to the heathen multitudes where the apostle preached: For if Christ be supposed to have no superior nature to his human soul and body, the gentiles would plead hard for their inferior gods and heroes, both as having an extensive power in themselves suited to their particular

charge, and as being appointed by Jupiter, their chief god, to perform various services for mankind, to exercise their deputed powers, and to receive inferior worship. Now it would be a tedious and difficult matter to convince the gentiles of the real difference between their own heroes and the christian hero; and it would be hard to make it appear to them, that the Christians' inferior god had a much juster title to worship than the heathen inferior gods, upon the supposition of having no god beside him who made all things. And while the apostles continually inculcated this doctrine of the unity of God; and while the gentiles themselves, as well as the apostles, called every thing God which they worshipped, it would be very hard to prove to them, that Jesus Christ, if he were a mere creature, had so much better pretence and claim to their worship than their own heroes had, without much labour of distinctions far above the reach of the multitudes; whereas the adorableness of Christ, on the account of the supreme indwelling godhead, sets all things right with ease and plainness: He must be worshipped as supreme God, for he is one with God supreme.

Indeed the Appellant exclaims against this sort of reasoning: "Would it not grieve one," says he, "if it may not move one's indignation, to see Christians representing the worship of Christ, the only true and proper worship which the gospel directs us to pay unto him, as little better than heathenish idolatry; and thus in effect making the blessed Jesus no better than an idol?" *Appeal*, page 128.

Surely the Appellant must needs know, that I am not singular in this reasoning; and that this is no new charge against this doctrine: Dr. Cudworth, in his *Intellectual System*, Dr. Waterland, in his *Defence of the Queries*, Dr. Smallbroke, in his *Two Sermons against Arianism*, and others, concur with the fathers writing on this subject, to charge the arians with a restoration of idolatry and support of polytheism, like that of the pagans, when they called Jesus Christ a mere creature, and yet pay him religious worship.

And truly, if this argument move grief and indignation, it will fall heavy on the arian scheme, and not on my argument: For it is that scheme which represents the blessed Jesus as an inferior god, and thus brings him too near to the rank of those inferior gods or heroes in the sense of the heathens; whereas the Scripture places him in a vastly superior character, as *God over all, blessed for ever*, and as one with God the Father; and though I believe from my heart, that several of these writers have a sacred and profound reverence for the blessed Jesus, and adore, and love, and trust in him, yet this inferior or figurative godhead, which is all they usually allow him; and upon which they build his worship, seems to bring him down too near to those ideas and characters which the heathens attributed to their inferior gods. I am well persuaded, that these gentlemen abhor the thought of such indignity offered to our blessed Lord, but their opinion seems to draw such consequences after it, and it is neither unfair nor unfriendly to give them a hint of it.

To conclude this part of the argument, to prove the everlasting obligation of this command, to worship God only, I beg leave to transcribe a few lines from Mr. Boyse, in his excellent *Vindication of the true Deity of our blessed Saviour*, page 142, edition the third. "Upon the whole, the opinion and practice of the unitarians plainly re-advances that creature-worship, which is one great design of the christian religion to overturn and abolish. It undermines that grand article of the everlasting gospel that was to be preached *to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people;—fear God, and*

give glory to him, for the hour of his judgment is come; and worship him that made heaven and earth, and the sea and the fountains of waters; Rev. xiv. 6, 7. And this it does by setting up, as an object of religious worship, a creature, to whom neither the divine perfections nor works belong."

Thus I have confirmed this argument for the divinity of Christ, which is drawn from religious worship paid to him, by answering the objection which supposes religious worship not forbidden to a creature under the New Testament, though it was under the Old: And I think it is made pretty evident, that the same prohibition stands still in force under the New Testament, and that the first command obliges Christians as well as Jews, *viz. Thou shalt have no other gods before Me;* and therefore if Christ is a god, or an object of religious worship, though he be another person, yet he is not another god, but one and the same god with the Father, or the God of Israel, for we must have *no other god* but the God of Israel; we must not have two gods.

A second objection, which is used by the refiners of the arian scheme, against the appropriating all religious worship to God alone, is, that " this doctrine absolutely precludes God himself from all right of appointing any person to be adored with any religious worship at all, whatsoever exalted station he may be raised to in the divine economy, unless he has true and eternal godhead in him; that is, unless he has the same inherent and independent right to this worship as God the Father himself has."

Answer. Suppose it be granted, that this doctrine does preclude it; but then let it be considered, it is God himself has precluded it in his own word, whence this our doctrine is derived. I will not say, this is absolutely precluded in the nature of things; but if God himself, in every part of his word, both in the Old and New Testament, has confined religious worship to himself, as his own prerogative; and rather than let any mere creature be worshipped, if he condescends himself, in the person of his Son, or in union with the man Christ Jesus, to assume inferior characters, and transact inferior concerns in his own economical kingdom; surely there is nothing in this which is absurd or unscriptural. It rather makes a divine grandeur run through all the transactions of God with the children of men; and there is no dishonour done to the sovereignty of God, by precluding himself, by his own counsels, and his own revelations, from exalting any mere creature to be the object of religious worship.

Now that God has precluded all the mere created beings, even of the invisible world, from this honour, seems naturally to be inferred from the care and solicitude which God has shewn in the Old Testament as well as in the New, to prevent angels from receiving any religious worship from the children of men. And Dr. Waterland offers most ingenious and probable reasons for it; *Defence* I. Query XVI. pages 231, 232: Suppose some exalted creatures could know, hear, and relieve our wants at any distance; suppose they were appointed to bear some rule over us, and suppose we thought it proper to respect, worship, and adore them accordingly: " But God's thoughts are not our thoughts; he has entered an express caveat and prohibition in the case. Possibly he may apprehend it to be more for his own glory, and more for our good, that our whole worship and service be paid to him than a part only. Possibly he may know, such is human infirmity, that if any part, or kind, or degree, of religious worship, was permitted to be given to creatures, it might insensibly alienate our minds from the Creator, or eat out all our reverence and respect for God. Or, it may be, that while our acknowledgments are ordered to be paid to him, and to him alone, we may

thereby be induced to live more in dependence on him; become more immediately united to him; and have the greater love and esteem for him. He will not, perhaps, leave his favours in the hands, or in the disposal of his creatures, lest we should forget whom we are principally obliged to; or lest we should imagine that he is not always every where present, to hear our petitions and to answer them, according to his own good pleasure. These, or a thousand better reasons, infinite wisdom may have, for appropriating all acts of religious worship to God. It is sufficient for us to know that he has done it: And of this, holy Scripture has given abundant proof." Thus that learned author.

Wheresoever angels appear in Scripture, both under the jewish and christian economy, you find them solicitous to forbid the worship of themselves, unless where the Angel of the covenant, or the Angel of God's presence appeared, that is, the Messiah, in whom was the name of God, and who assumed the titles of *Jehovah* and the *God of Israel*, whom we generally believe to be the Lord Jesus Christ himself. Worshipping of angels is a thing utterly forbidden, and yet if the Angel of the covenant was worshipped, I cannot account for it any other way, but by supposing the angel who said *I am Jehovah*, was really Jehovah, the only true God, or had the fulness of the godhead dwelling in him; he was "God manifest in the burning bush," "God manifest in the Shechinah," before he was *God manifest in the flesh.*

There is a third objection, which they bring against the doctrine of the worship of Christ, founded on his true and eternal godhead, and it is this: "That the Scripture never recommends the worship of Christ upon this account, nor is there any one instance where it appears that he was worshipped as the supreme God: The Scripture plainly puts it upon another foot, *viz.* because *the Father hath committed all judgment to him, therefore all men must honour him;* because *God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, &c.* upon the account of his humiliation, and his obedience to death; because God hath commanded, saying, *Let all the angels of God worship him;* and that *the Lamb is worthy to receive power and glory, &c.* because *he was slain, and has redeemed us to God.* Now if his godhead were the true foundation of religious worship, it is strange, say they, that this only foundation, this standing and eternal ground of all that religious worship, which we are bound to give to Christ, should be so entirely overlooked in all the instances of it, and that the worship of him should always be put upon another foot." *Appeal*, pages 128, 129.

Answer I. I think it is not strictly true that the godhead of Christ is never mentioned in Scripture as the ground of his worship; Psalm xlv. 6, *Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever.* And *verse* 11, the Psalmist addresses the church thus: *He is thy Lord, and worship thou him.* His godhead and his lordship are both mentioned before the command of worship. See also Psalm xcvii. 1, &c. *The* Lord [Jehovah] *reigneth, let the earth rejoice.—The hills melted like wax at the presence of the* Lord, *at the presence of the Lord of the whole earth. The heavens declare his righteousness, and all the people see his glory. Confounded be all they that serve graven images: Worship Him, all ye gods.* Now both these passages of Scripture are applied to Christ, Heb. i. 6, 8, *When he bringeth in the first-begotten into the world, he saith, Let all the angels of God worship him.—And unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and*

ever. See more in *Psalm* cii. 15, 22, 24. *Isaiah* viii. 13, 14, &c. as before, page 394. Thus you see Christ is called *Jehovah* and *God* in those very places where his worship is required. That text in *Phil.* ii. 9—11, where the human nature of Christ seems to be taken into the complex object of worship, as I shall shew afterward, that very text is borrowed from *Isaiah* xlv. 23, where *God, the only true God, the just God and Saviour,* is represented as the object of religious worship, and that upon the account of his godhead, as well as of his salvation: And therefore it is the same godhead that may lay a just foundation for the worship of Christ in those very places of Scripture in the New Testament, which require us to worship him as God-man, or Mediator.

See further, *John* v. 23, where all men are ordered to *honour the Son, even as they honour the Father.* There are some characters which seem to imply godhead united to man in the context, *viz.* having life in himself, raising the dead, doing whatsoever the Father doth, &c. And if the last verses of *Jude* be a doxology given to Christ, he is there called *the only wise God our Saviour,* which is a sufficient ground for such a doxology. And I think the reasons which I have formerly given for the proof of this exposition, maintain a good degree of strength still, notwithstanding what has been said in opposition to it.

Answer II. As there are some Scriptures under the Old Testament which demand the worship of God the Father on the account of his being the "one true God, omniscient, omnipotent, and the Creator of all things;" so there are other Scriptures which demand the worship of him upon the account of the various benefits which he has bestowed upon Israel, *viz.* because he has "brought them out of the land of Egypt and the house of bondage," because he has "delivered and saved them," he is "their Redeemer and their King."* It is the divine nature that renders God the Father properly capable of religious worship according to the Scripture, but his various benefits are strong reasons and obligations upon all mankind, and especially upon his own people, to worship him. These benefits do not add a new foundation for his worship, but add new obligations upon creatures to pay him divine adoration. These benefits do also determine and model the special forms and expressions of worship, paid to God the Father: He is to be worshipped, because he is God, but he is to be worshipped in this or that form of address, that is, as a deliverer or a saviour, &c. because he rescued and saved his people.

In like manner, as there are some texts of Scripture which represent our Lord Jesus Christ as God, and which in the same place require or demand religious worship for him; so there are other places which shew us the obligations that lie upon us to worship Christ Jesus, and reveal to us the particular forms and language of worship in which we should address him, *viz.* "as the Lamb that was slain and has redeemed us;" as "he that was obedient to the death, and died for us, and redeemed us to God with his blood." Though it is his deity still that renders him capable of religious adoration,

* So it is said in the New Testament: Rev. xix. 1, 2, *Salvation, and glory, and honour—unto the Lord our God, for true and righteous are his judgments.* Rev. iv. 11, *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour—for thou hast created all things.* Creation and judgment, truth and righteousness, are the reasons or motives given for the worship of the Father: But his divinity stands as the foundation of worship, whatever particular operations may be assigned as the reasons and motives of it. So Christ may be said to be worshipped because he is Creator as well as Judge, *John* i. 3. *John* v. 22, 23; yet his divinity lies at the bottom to support it.

yet some of the reasons and motives why we worship him, are derived from what his human nature has done.

It is a frequent thing with the Scripture to represent our obligations to duty as derived from the benefits we receive; and to represent the object of our worship rather in his relation to us, and our dependence upon him, than in his own metaphysical nature and incomprehensible essence: And since the Scripture has dealt thus in relation to God the Father and his worship, no wonder that it speaks the same sort of language with regard to Jesus Christ, when he is revealed as the object of our worship. We praise God the Father, because he has created us, *Psalm* c. 3, 4; and the Son, because he redeemed us, *Rev.* v. 9—13.

But that I may give the objection its full weight and force, it may be replied here, that "not only our obligation to worship Christ, but even his right to receive our worship, seems to be given him by the Father, upon the account of his humiliation and obedience to death;" especially in that famous Scripture, *Phil.* ii. 7, 8, 9, "He took upon him the form of a servant; he was found in the likeness of men; he humbled himself, and became obedient to death, even the death of the cross: Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow," &c.

To this I answer, that in this passage the Scripture seems to have a peculiar reference to the exaltation of the human nature of Christ, to become part of the complex object of worship in union with the divine. Now this was an honour of which the man Jesus seems utterly incapable, according to the Scripture, had he not been united to God. I say, therefore, this text speaks of the worship of Christ as man in union with deity, and that not only because of the appropriation of all religious worship to God, but the very language in which this worship of Christ is expressed by the apostle, is taken from *Isaiah* xlv. 23, where the true God, or Jehovah, assumes this worship; and the citation of it by St. Paul, both here and in *Rom.* xiv. 10—12, proves the godhead of Christ. But when this man, who is united to God, had thus humbled himself, then the Father ordained him publicly to receive his proper share of that religious honour which is paid to God-man, or God dwelling in human nature. Then he was exalted as God-man and Mediator, to be adored by all men: He might be worshipped before as God in his divine robes, if I may so express it, but now he must be worshipped in his mediatorial robes, in his garments of flesh and blood. The public right of the man Jesus to religious worship, as part of the* complex person of the Mediator, is here manifested to the world, as a reward of his sufferings. This seems to be the precise meaning of the apostle in this place, as far as I am capable of penetrating into it.

* Some may complain that I speak without caution here, in calling the man Jesus a part of the complex person of our Mediator, because the godhead of Christ is usually described as a complete person, and the human nature of man is reckoned only an adjunct or appendix to the second person in the Trinity. I do not attempt here to refute this correction, nor will I insist upon the use of the word *part*, if the word *adjunct* or *appendix* will better serve the various designs of this doctrine. Yet it may not be amiss to cite Mr. Baxter on this occasion, in his *Paraphrase on Col.* i. 16, 17: "The orthodox hold that Christ hath only two natures in one person, the divine and human. And of these the subtle philosophers say, that his human nature is no part of his person, but an adjunct, because God cannot be a part. But others avoid this as dangerous." Thus you see in Mr. Baxter's opinion, some of the orthodox think it dangerous to deny the human nature of Christ to be a part of his person. And Turrettine confesses it to be a part of the person of the Mediator, though it is but an adjunct of the *Logos*, or Word, or second Person of the Trinity. *Institutionis Theologiæ, Loci* xiii. *Questionis Sextæ et Septimæ.* And after all, I think, this dispute would be a mere logomachy.

But the answer made to this present objection, as well as to others drawn from *John* v. 22, 23, will derive further force and evidence from the following propositions:

Proposition VII. "The godhead of Christ hath assumed the man Jesus into an unspeakable and most intimate union with itself, which is generally called an hypostatical or personal union."

The Scripture seems to express this in several places, as when Christ is called *God manifest in the flesh*, 1 Tim. iii. 16; when the *Word*, who *was God*, is said to be *made flesh*, John i. 1, 14: He who was of the seed of David after the flesh, *is over all, God blessed for ever*, Rom. ix. 5: *In him dwelleth all the fulness of the godhead bodily*, Col. ii. 9. These Scriptures have been sufficiently explained, and this proposition confirmed so far, that I shall not employ myself any further in it here.

Proposition VIII. "The complete person of our Lord Jesus Christ, or God-man, is a proper and appointed object of the christian worship."

Though the divinity of Christ is the sole foundation of these honours, yet when this divinity has put on human nature, and received it into a personal union with itself, in order to become a proper mediator between God the Father and mankind, then the whole person God-man may receive the worship, and stand entitled to the religious honour.

I am so far from being singular in this sentiment, that it might be easily shewn to be the opinion of a great part of our protestant writers. The name of Turrettine is well known in the learned world: In his *Institutions of Theology*, Place XIV. Question XVIII. Section 10, he determines "the human nature of Christ to be the inseparable adjunct of the divine nature in the matter of adoration, and that it is adored together with the Word." And in Section 12, he allows "the whole Mediator or God-man to be adored, though the human nature be not the formal and terminative object of worship." Section 14, "Adoration does not more confound the two natures of Christ, and the honour due to them, than faith does; for as it regards Christ, both God and man, distinctly in one person, so it attributes to him, according to both natures, that which belongs to him." Section 15, "Though the human nature or flesh of Christ is not adored by itself, or for itself, yet it is truly said to be adored in the Word, with whom it is personally united." And in Section 11, "Though it is the deity alone that makes the person of God-man adorable, yet Christ as Mediator must be adored, and various motives to worship him are drawn from his mediation."

Dr. Owen is of the same mind: See his *Treatise of the Person of Christ*, page 152, "His divine nature is the proper formal object of our faith, but the entire person, as God and man, is the immediate object of it. We believe in him because he is God; but we believe in him as he is God and man in one person. All of Christ is considered and glorified in this acting of faith on him, and the benefits of his mediation are the special motives thereunto." Page 322, "The human nature of Christ in his divine person, and together with it, is the object of all divine adoration and worship. *Rev.* v. 13, All creatures whatever do for ever ascribe *blessing, honour, glory, and power unto the Lamb*, in the same manner as *unto him who sits upon the throne.* But no other creature either is, or ever can be exalted into such a condition of glory, as to be the object of any divine worship."

I must confess there are some few writers that imagine it is the pure godhead of Christ alone is the single object of worship; and they are afraid to allow the united human nature to be considered as a part of the complex person worshipped, lest

worship should seem to be given to any thing that is not God. I must own, that in treating matters so sublime, we ought to be well upon our guard, lest while we would pay just honour to the man Jesus, we should take away some of the just prerogatives of his godhead: But on the other hand, we must learn what worship we ought to pay to Christ from the Scripture itself, since it is a matter of pure revelation; and I should not readily allow the man Jesus to be taken into the complex object of worship, if the Scripture itself did not seem to lead me to it, by the following considerations:

Consideration I. The worship of the complex person of our Lord Jesus Christ is represented as an appointed worship, and that* partly as an honour bestowed upon him by the Father, by way of recompence for his sufferings: Phil. ii. 9, *Wherefore—God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name.* Now the pure godhead of Christ never did or could suffer; that is and always was worthy of our religious worship, had it never assumed human nature, had Christ never been obedient to the death, and never redeemed us. But the human nature may become part of the complex object of worship, by the appointment and gift of the Father, partly upon the account of its sufferings. The man was first united to godhead with this very view and design, that he should suffer and die; and as his union to godhead renders him capable of religious honour, so his sufferings and death may be appointed in the counsels of God, to lead the way to his actual enjoyment of it, or to some higher degrees of it.

Consideration II. It is the Mediator Christ Jesus who is worshipped under his character as Mediator. Now this office or character includes his human nature as well as his divine: Nay, it has a peculiar respect to his human nature, as St. Paul tells Timothy, for *there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus,* 1 Tim. ii. 5. The honour is paid to the "Lamb that was slain, in the midst of the throne;" and the heavenly spirits worship him, because he has fulfilled the office of a Mediator, and "redeemed them to God with his blood;" *Rev.* v. 9. The man Jesus is "appointed the Judge of the world," *Acts* xvii. 31; and "all men are therefore obliged to honour him as they honour the Father, because he is the Son of man," that is, the Messiah, with a connotation of his manhood, *John* v. 23, 27. It is as Mediator we are to believe or trust in him, and to call upon him: It is as God-man and Mediator, that dying Stephen committed his soul to him, for he saw him with his eyes. Christ requires us to believe on him as the means or method of obtaining salvation: Now it is not his pure godhead, but the person God-man who has purchased salvation, and who is exalted to bestow it, and therefore we must trust in this person, and call upon him under this character as God-man.

Consideration III. The very actions and sufferings of his human nature are chiefly mentioned in some of those places where honour and worship are not only appointed to him by the Father, but actually given him by the saints. When the apostle had described him as *man, the Son of man,* or *the second Adam,* Heb. ii. 9, he adds, *We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour;* and accordingly this honour and this glory, which he obtained by his death, is paid in heaven, and ought to be paid him on earth. Heaven is full of this worship, and it is

* I use the word *partly,* to shew, that the man Jesus, in union with godhead, might be appointed to be adored at his incarnation or before, and yet he might have a further claim to it given him upon his death and resurrection, and thus it may be said, *Therefore God hath highly exalted him,* Phil. ii. 9—11, even as Jesus was "beloved of God always," and yet he himself says, *Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, and take it again,* John x. 17.

represented as given to *the Lamb* by the whole creation, *Rev.* v. 13, and particularly by saints, and sometimes by angels, verses 8, 9, 10, 11, 12. *Worthy is the Lamb, that was slain, to receive honour and power,* Rev. v. 13. *To him that loved us, and washed us—in his own blood—be glory and dominion for ever,* Rev. i. 5, 6. " Because he was obedient to the death of the cross, therefore the Father has appointed that every knee shall bow to him," *Phil.* ii. 8, 9, 10.

Now if these three considerations are put together, they seem to give a sufficient confirmation of the sentiments of those two great men, Doctor Owen and Professor Turrettine, in this point, *viz.* That the whole complex person of Christ, both God and Man, is the true object of our worship.

Objection. " But how can it be that the divine nature or godhead can be the only foundation of worship, and yet Jesus Christ be worshipped as a complex person, God and Man? Is not this an allowance of religious worship to be given to a creature as well as to God?"

Answer. It is the complete person who is the proper object of worship; the Man could never be worshipped, if he were not also God. But when godhead assumes a creature into so near an union as to make one person with itself, the religious honour may be paid to the whole person, without allowing religious honour to be paid to any mere creature.* This may be explained by an example or two, whereby we may learn that what belongs not to any single nature in itself, may come to belong to it in union with another nature.

We may borrow one example from Scripture: 1 *John* i. 1, 2, 3, " The word of God, the eternal life, which was with the Father, is said to be seen, and heard, and handled." Now if we take this *Logos*, or Word, in any sense whatsoever, it certainly signifies a most exalted spiritual being, and in itself it is not capable of being seen, being heard, being handled; so a mere creature, considered in itself, is not capable of religious worship. But when this *Logos* is united to flesh and blood, then it makes one complex person, and thus it is seen, it is heard, it is handled: So the man Jesus being united to godhead makes one complex person, and thus receives its share of honour in the worship paid to the person of Christ. Yet still the foundation of religious worship lies only in the godhead, to which the man Jesus is united, even as the foundation of corporeal attributes, seeing, hearing, handling, lies only in flesh and blood; to which the *Logos*, or divine Word, is united.

But there is another example or similitude which perhaps comes nearer to the subject, and, I think, makes it evident beyond exception, how the divinity of Christ may be the only foundation of religious worship, and yet the man Jesus may be assumed into a kind of partnership. Let us survey and compare it in these several successive views: 1. Suppose a human spirit, in the world of separate spirits, had some intellectual excellencies above its fellow-spirits, it might receive human honours upon this account: So was the godhead of Jesus Christ supreme in the invisible world, and received religious honours. 2. Suppose this excellent human spirit assumed a beautiful and graceful body into union with itself, then this whole human person might not only receive human

* When I speak in any of my writings of worshipping that which is not God, and call it idolatry, I desire to be understood in this sense, *viz.* worshipping that which has not true godhead belonging to it, at least as a part of the compounded being or person. For though the human nature of Christ is not true God, yet it is worshipped, not in and by itself, but in and with the divine, and as a part of the complex nature of the Mediator.

honours upon the account of its intellectual excellencies, but it might receive addresses of human honour, because of its beauty and graceful figure or motion: So the godhead of Christ having assumed the man Jesus into union with itself, this whole person might not only receive religious honours upon the account of its divine perfections, but also on the account of the characters, graces, obedience, and sufferings of the man Jesus. Such honours are frequently paid to Christ in Scripture. And yet further, as some of the particular forms of address made to this supposed whole human person, may be derived from some special properties, or graceful motions of the body; so some of the particular forms of address made to the whole person of Christ, are derived from the actions and sufferings of his manhood. The scriptural examples of worship paid to Christ manifest this. 3. The gestures of human honour, such as bowing the head or the knee, together with the acclamations or songs of human praise which are paid to this supposed human person, may be seen and heard with agreeable sensations by the human body as an animal, as well as noticed and accepted by the human spirit united to it: So the religious honours which are paid to Christ may be seen and heard, or known and observed by the man Jesus with special satisfaction, as well as they are noticed and accepted by the indwelling godhead united to him. 4. Yet the beautiful and graceful body, considered apart from the human soul, is not capable of human honours, even as the man Jesus apart from the Deity is not capable, according to Scripture, of religious honours. 5. Therefore the whole foundation of human honours paid to this united soul and body, this complex human person, lies in the intelligent nature, or the soul: So the whole foundation of religious honours paid, or payable, to this united God and man, this complex person of Christ, lies in the divine nature or godhead, though some special reasons, motives, and forms of address, may be borrowed from this human nature.

I know there may be a great deal of metaphysical controversy raised to perplex this, or any other representation of things: But if we will attend to this illustration, I think it sets the whole matter of the worship of Jesus Christ, God-man, in a fair and easy light; and yet at the same time maintains the foundation of religious worship payable to Christ to be laid in his divine nature.

Now, if we consider the worship of Christ, as God-man and Mediator, in this manner of representation, it gives a natural and easy solution to many difficulties that have been proposed.

Particularly that objection derived from John v. 22, 23, *The Father has committed all judgment to the Son, that all men might honour the Son, as they honour the Father.* Here some have said, "It were a most absurd interpretation, that the Father has committed all judgment to my human nature, that men might honour my divine nature; for the divine nature receives nothing hereby, and is adorable on a much higher reason without it." Certainly the same subject is intended to be honoured, which is invested with authority from God, *viz.* the Son of man.

Answer. This is granted, that it is the same subject receives authority and receives honour; and it is no absurd interpretation to say, the Father has committed all judgment to my human nature, being united to the divine, which union makes me capable of this office, that men might honour my human nature in union with the divine, which union renders the whole complex person capable of this honour or adoration. Though this objection might also be answered another way, as Dr. Waterland, *Defence* II. Query XVI. page 381, "Christ is not worshipped because God committed judgment to him, but God

committed it to him for this purpose, that men might know the divinity of his person, and thereupon worship him." But in this solution of the difficulty, both the office and the worship seem to be attributed alone to the divine nature of Christ, and therefore I rather choose the former solution.

A further inquiry will arise here, "Whether the human nature of Christ shares in the divine honours that are paid to his person?"

Answer. Divine honour or worship may signify, either honour paid to a divine person, or else an acknowledgement of divine perfections. In the first sense the human nature may share in divine worship, in the second it cannot so properly. But,

To answer this more particularly, let us remember that the religious honours which are paid to the person of Christ, may be considered either as the ascription of divine perfections and operations to him, or as the ascription of human graces, perfections, kindnesses, operations, or sufferings, or as the ascription of mediatorial offices, operations, and benefits, which are the result of both divine and human natures.

Now I grant the human nature, distinctly considered, cannot directly share in the ascriptions of divine perfections, though it may receive sensible pleasure in seeing divine honours paid to the godhead. But the human nature considered as a part of the complex person of Christ, may receive its share of the ascription both of human and mediatorial characters and operations to this complex person, and derive a sensible satisfaction thence. For as we cannot suppose, that the human nature of Christ in this exalted state can be utterly ignorant of the knees that bow to his person, and the tongues confessing that he is Lord; so the man Jesus cannot choose but have a sacred relish and complacency in these honours, as a reward of his sufferings, always referring them to the final glory of the divine nature. If Jesus Christ be worshipped as the Lamb that was slain, and his human nature takes cognizance of these addresses, it cannot but receive its own share of satisfaction from this knowledge.

If this proposition want further illustration, let us try if the following supposition will do it. Suppose God himself were clothed with a robe of light which had intelligence or consciousness in it; suppose, in our addresses to God thus arrayed with light, we should be required to make honourable mention of that vesture of glory which surrounded him; might not this intellectual glory be said to receive honour or worship from us, as considered in union with the in-dwelling deity? And might it not take cognizance of this honour with delight and just approbation? Yet this intellectual glory, this conscious light, would by no means be a proper object of any such honours in itself, but merely by virtue of the in-dwelling God: And every degree of honour or satisfaction which it received would redound to the glory of God himself who dwelt in the midst of it. Thus God dwelling in the manhood of Christ, as in a vesture or tabernacle, is worshipped by men; and some of the addresses he receives are paid to him expressly as incarnate, and thus the manhood is conscious of, and receives its own appointed share of the honour.

But these thoughts lead me on to the next proposition.

Proposition IX. "Since the design of the union of God and man in one person, was to render Christ a fit Mediator, therefore the worship that is paid him may be considered either as ultimate or as mediatorial, and it may in some sense be called either supreme or subordinate."

Religious worship may be considered with relation to its foundation, which renders

the object capable of it, and in this sense it may be always called supreme, for no person who has not true and proper godhead can demand religious worship.

But when worship is considered with relation to its end or design, or has a peculiar respect to the character of Christ as Mediator, then it may sometimes be called mediatorial or subordinate, for when Christ is worshipped in his mediatorial capacity, the design is, that he may fulfil some mediatory office for us, in order to bring us to God and heaven, or it is to give him thanks that he has done it.

Again, if the worship of Christ be considered with regard to the forms or modes of address, it may, perhaps, be called either ultimate and supreme, or mediatorial and subordinate. It was supreme and ultimate when he was worshipped in his appearances to the patriarchs as God Almighty; it is the same when we pay him the honour of divine perfections residing in him, even the same divine perfections which are in the Father, and say, "Glory be to thy name, O Jesus, who art over all, God blessed for ever." But it may be called mediatorial and subordinate when we trust in him, or entreat him to bring us near to God, when we call upon his name to bestow on us the grace and gifts he has received of the Father for us; or when we ascribe "honour to him who has washed us in his blood," and reconciled us to God.

Christ, considered explicitly as the second person of the Trinity, or considered as God incarnate, perhaps, has not always such honours paid to him in Scripture as are supreme and ultimate in the highest and divinest sense. But this is not for want of dignity or deity in his complete person, but because Christ, the second person, or incarnate, is represented as a Mediator in the New Testament: And according to the economy of the gospel, the forms of worship paid to him under this character, are rather mediatorial and subordinate: Whereas the forms of ultimate and supreme worship are generally appropriated to God in the person of the Father, as sustaining in that economy the dignity and state of supreme godhead.

I confess, that in my *Book of the Trinity*, I have followed some great writers, and allowed no different sorts or degrees of religious worship mentioned in Scripture, nor any scriptural difference between supreme and subordinate religious worship. In so sublime and so difficult a subject we are too ready to follow the phrases and language of great writers without a due examination: I beg leave here to correct these expressions, and to explain myself according to the distinction which I have now proposed. I know of no subordinate worship in Scripture with regard to the foundation of it, or that which renders the object capable of religious worship; this is the sense in which I meant all worship is supreme, that is, it admits no person to be the object of it who is not God; but there may be mediate or subordinate forms of worship paid to him that is true God, when in union with an inferior nature he condescends to take upon him the form or character of a Mediator.

All the expressions of Scripture which represent our "coming to the Father by Jesus Christ, or praying to the Father in his name, or giving thanks to God in the name of Jesus Christ, and offering the sacrifice of praise by him, that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ:" This language seems to signify mediate and subordinate worship, that is, religious honour paid to Jesus Christ as Mediator, in order to make us and our services acceptable to God the Father. And when the man Christ Jesus is said to be exalted, that *at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, and every tongue*

confess, that Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father, it seems to imply this mediate or subordinate worship, that is, as to the special purpose and design of it, though at the same time this very man Christ Jesus is united to the divine nature, and by that means rendered capable of being worshipped as part of the complex person God-man.

There are two or three senses in which it may be said that Christ Jesus is worshipped to the glory of the Father.

I. As God the Father, or the godhead subsisting in the person and character of the Father, sustains the dignity of supreme God and sovereign Lord and Governor in the economical kingdom, as he maintains the rights and majesty of the divine nature, and transacts all its affairs through his Son Jesus Christ, as a divine medium; in this sense, though the divine nature to which the man Jesus Christ is united be the same with that in the Father, yet as it subsists in the person and character of the Father, it assumes supremacy, and all things are done to its glory; and all that the man Jesus does, or enjoys, is to the glory of the Father, though the same united godhead capacitates him for these actions, honours, or enjoyments.

II. When Christ is worshipped, it is to the glory of the Father, because it is God the Father has appointed this union of the man Jesus to the divine nature, whereby, as a part of the complex person of the Mediator, he is made the object of religious worship. And,

III. As our addresses to Jesus Christ as Mediator, or God-man, are performed by us with this design, that we may glorify the person of God the Father, or the divine nature in the character of supreme majesty and godhead.

Now that all this may be done without injury to the sacred doctrine of God alone being the proper or fundamental object of worship, I shall attempt to explain by this similitude: Suppose the usual and peculiar honour paid to Roman emperors were prostration; suppose the emperor *Constantine* and his son possessed a complete equal share in the empire; and suppose *Caius*, a common soldier, had offended *Constantine* the father; then his son puts on the garments of a common soldier, makes a visit to *Caius* in the army, and promises him to become a mediator with his father, to reconcile him to the offending soldier *Caius*. Upon this view, *Caius* falls prostrate, and pays the son imperial honours, and entreats him to fulfil this work of mediation, or gives him thanks for what he has done in it: He also addresses *Constantine* the father with prostration, or imperial honours, but comes in the name of his son, and for his sake is admitted into favour. The son here receives imperial honour because he is still emperor, which is the foundation of it; yet the honour is but mediatorial and subordinate, because the design of it is to draw near to the father by the son. *Constantine* the father always receives imperial honours from *Caius*, which are ultimate and supreme, for he sustains the dignity and majesty of empire. The son, though equal in the empire, yet receives mediate honours, because he condescends to be a mediator: And yet the manner in which *Caius* pays these mediate honours, *viz.* prostration, is supreme and imperial, or shews the son to be an emperor too.

Thus the divine nature, as subsisting in God the Father, receives only supreme and ultimate honour from us sinners: But God, as vested with human nature, or the man Jesus united to godhead, receives mediatory honours, because the design of our address to him is to reconcile us to God the Father: Yet these mediatory honours are divine, and paid to him in a religious manner, so as at the same time to acknowledge his communion in the divine nature, and his oneness with God the Father. The person

of Christ is partaker of religious and divine honours; supreme, if you consider the foundation of them, but mediate or subordinate, if you consider the design of them.

I am very unwilling, in writing on this sacred subject of divine worship, to oppose so great and excellent a defender of the divinity of Christ, as Doctor Waterland. He utterly denies, indeed, all mediate or subordinate worship, yet let it be noted that he allows Christ to be worshipped under the character and office of Mediator; but since as Mediator he is God as well as man, he maintains it is divine worship is paid him under all his offices. "He is a divine Mediator, a divine Priest, a divine Prophet, a divine King; and so our worship of him never wants its proper object, never moves from its proper foundation, but remains constantly the same. Our worship of Christ as a Mediator, does not hinder us from considering him as God at the same time, any more than our considering the Father as King, Judge, Preserver, or Rewarder, hinders us from considering him also as divine." I perfectly agree to these sentiments. All the worship that is paid to Christ may be called divine, because the complex object of it has a divine nature; yet I think it cannot always so properly be called supreme and ultimate, because some of the addresses which are made to him, who is God, particularly refer to what he has done, and to what he does, as man and Mediator, which is a subordinate and not a supreme character. Nor can I see any inconvenience in calling this worship mediatorial or subordinate, especially since the New Testament seems to give the most frequent precepts and patterns of that worship which is due to Christ in his mediatorial character rather than in his pure godhead.

I think we may maintain the deity of Christ, and the necessity of his deity to render him adorable, without denying that mediatorial worship which seems to be the most natural and obvious meaning of several Scriptures. And even in the esteem of our opponents, it adds honour and justice to an argument against themselves, when we allow what may fairly be allowed, and do not strain the Scripture from its most obvious meaning, in order to disallow and deny every thing which our opponents have some colour to assert.

Objection. There is no worship of God the supreme Being, according to the gospel, but what must be offered through Christ as a Mediator. *No man cometh unto the Father but by Me;* John xiv. 6. Now if Christ be worshipped with divine worship as God supreme, who can be the Mediator? So that when I worship him with divine worship as God, I must worship him without a mediator, which is not according to the gospel.

This objection may be answered two ways, *viz.* By considering Christ the Mediator in his human nature, or in his divine.

Answer I. If we consider Christ in his human nature, he is an all-sufficient Mediator to bring sinners into the favour of God, because he has done and suffered every thing that is necessary to procure peace; and he is united to the divine nature, whence all his mediatorial actions and capacities receive their efficacy. The man Jesus Christ is *a Mediator between God and men*, as the Scripture expresses it, 1 *Tim.* ii. 5, and he may be addressed with religious worship, because he is united to God, or he is one with God: And yet he may be thus addressed without another mediator, for nothing in the gospel forbids a sinner to worship God-man, or a man united to God, without any medium. Or,

Answer II. If we consider Christ the Mediator in his divine nature, we may address him with divine and mediatorial worship without any other medium; for in the character of Mediator, and as he is united to man, he is not that supreme offended majesty of heaven, which refuses access to sinners without a mediator. It is God in the person

of the Father who sustains the supreme dignity and majesty of godhead, or the character of supreme Governor; and it is in his person that the Deity is dishonoured by the sins of men; therefore he is not to be approached under the gospel by offending sinners without a mediator: And the word *Father* is put with great propriety and emphasis into that text, John xiv. 6, *No man cometh unto the Father but by me.* But the same God in the person of the Son or Mediator, dwelling in the human nature of his Son Jesus, may be worshipped without a mediator; for in this view, the godhead does, as it were, put off the character of supreme Governor, by assuming human nature, by condescending to accept the work of reconciliation, and to sustain the office of a mediator.

The foregoing similitude will serve to illustrate this. The son of *Constantine* is emperor as well as the father, and is offended as well as the father, because the soldier *Caius* had broken the laws of the empire; and therefore the son will not admit *Caius* the offender to approach him, or come into his presence, when he is sitting on the imperial throne, assuming the character of emperor: But when he has put on the garments of a common soldier, that he may become a mediator, he gives *Caius* the offender leave to address him as a mediator, and thus reconciles him to the offended emperor, to *Constantine* his father.

Lest there should be any exception taken against this similitude, because *Constantine* and his son are two distinct beings, whereas the godhead of the Father and the godhead of the Son is the same, I might represent the matter thus: Suppose there were but one single emperor of Rome, and call him *Augustus Cæsar*, he may refuse to admit an offender into his presence, without a mediator, while he sits on the imperial throne, dressed in robes imperial; and yet *Augustus Cæsar* himself may put on meaner raiment, may visit the offender in his own dwelling, and permit him to converse with himself, though he be emperor, under the inferior character of a friend, that would willingly reconcile the offender to himself as emperor: Thus "God in Christ is reconciling the world to himself." God in Christ may visit us offending sinners in our own dwelling on earth; he may permit us to address and worship him without any other mediator, though God in the person of the Father, and as supreme Governor, would not suffer it.

There does not seem any thing in all this, either unscriptural, or contrary to common reason; nor has it any thing in it so disagreeable to human ideas and customs, but it might lead us into a clear and intelligible conception of these divine mysteries, if we could but suffer ourselves to receive such an explication of difficulties in divine matters, as may be borrowed from human affairs. And surely it is in such sort of human language that God in his word reveals to us the mysteries of salvation; and our blessed Saviour in this manner, by parables drawn from earthly things, represents to us things heavenly.

CONCLUSION.

I shall conclude this discourse with a short recapitulation of it under the following queries, and a remark or two on the common sense of the arians and the trinitarians about the worship of Christ.

Query I. Is it not the constant custom, both of scriptural and heathen writers, to give the name of *god* to every thing that is made the object of religious worship, whether it be superior or inferior, whether it be one or many?

Query II. Is it not expressly forbidden in the first command, to have any other god or gods, besides Jehovah the God of Israel; that is, to receive or admit any other object of religious worship?

Query III. Does not this command seem to be of everlasting continuance, by the repetition and establishment of it under the New Testament, as well by the peculiar and repeated solemnities of its sanction under the Old?

Query IV. Is not our blessed Saviour called God several times in the New Testament, and is he not also represented as a proper object of worship, both in precept and example?

Query V. Does it not therefore appear a most natural consequence, that he is the true God? Or that Jesus Christ has such an union and communion with Jehovah the God of Israel, as to be called by the same names in their sublime sense, and to receive religious worship accordingly?

Query VI. Are there not some expressions in the New Testament, where Christ seems to be exalted and advanced to receive religious worship, as a gift from God the Father, and sometimes as a reward of the sufferings of his human nature?

Query VII. Does not his human nature itself, according to the language of Scripture, seem to be the more immediate object of this exaltation and reward, and to be admitted so far into a share of these honours as it is capable of receiving them?

Query VIII. May not this difficulty be solved, by supposing the man Jesus, by his most intimate union to, or oneness with Jehovah, or the God of Israel, to become one person with him, and thereby become a part of the object of religious worship, from which all other creatures are for ever excluded, because they have not this privilege of personal union with the divine nature?

THE REMARKS ARE THESE.

The doctrine of religious worship paid to the man Jesus, is acknowledged by the arians, and accounted for by the Appellant, by supposing him to be exalted by the appointment of God the Father to this honour, though in truth he be only a creature or a being inferior to the true God; and by supposing the first commandment to be so far repealed under the New Testament, as to admit of another object of worship, that is, another god besides the supreme God, the God of Israel. But this seems to be cutting the knot instead of untying it, and breaking through the great doctrines of the deity of Christ, and the perpetuity of the first command.

On the other hand, the man Jesus is excluded from all share whatsoever in religious honour or worship by some few trinitarian writers; and they determine those texts, wherein Christ is represented as exalted by the Father to this honour, to belong only to his divine nature considered as clothed with flesh and blood, and they explain them these two ways:

I. By supposing the divine nature in the person of Christ to be economically, though not really inferior to the divine nature in the person of the Father, for he sustained the character of God's servant, angel, messenger, &c. and that God the Father has given the divine nature of Christ an economical exaltation, or right to religious worship, both as dwelling in flesh, and as now publicly vested with regal authority, though it had really this right to divine worship before.

II. Since the deity of the Messiah was not distinctly known to former ages, they suppose that after the sufferings and death of Christ, the Father has more clearly published his deity to the world, and has declared him to be one God with himself,

and the proper object of worship. Thus God the Father's publication of the deity of Christ, as adorable, and of its peculiar additional claim to our worship since the sufferings of his human nature, is called, the exaltation of him to this worship on the account of those sufferings; as there are other things also said to be done in scripture-language when they are only manifested.

These are the justest and fairest representations which I know of the common solution of this difficulty; and so far as the exaltation of Christ in those texts can relate to his divine nature, I concur with these sentiments. And indeed I should have acquiesced herein entirely, and sought no farther, if I had not found some expressions of Scripture which seem to carry with them, in their plain literal sense, an exaltation of the man Jesus to some peculiar religious honours. This inclined me to attempt a solution of this difficulty in a little different manner. Nor am I alone herein, for there are several great divines in this same sentiment, *viz.* "That the human nature of Christ is a proper part of the person of the Mediator, and as such is joined with the divine nature in the religious worship and honours which are paid to Christ as God-man;" so Dr. Owen, Turrettine, &c. as I have cited them under Proposition VIII. page 404.

But if it be found plainly inconsistent either with the deity of Christ, or with the first commandment, I still think it better to relinquish this attempt, and betake myself to the common explication of these difficult texts, rather than renounce the deity of Christ, or the perpetuity of the first command, which seem to be established upon so numerous and so evident proofs of Scripture.

Yet after all, if these two different propositions are plainly revealed in Scripture, *viz.* "That religious worship belongs to God alone; and that the man Jesus, as personally united to the godhead, is exalted to some kind of partnership in this honour; I would choose to believe them both, since I do not see any evident contradiction in them, though perhaps I may not have hit upon the best way of reconciling them.

It is a general and excellent rule, that where two propositions are evidently true, we are not to reject either of them, because we cannot at present find the *modus* or manner how they are reconciled: I would be ever mindful of the weakness and narrowness of our understandings, and confess that there are some mysterious and sublime doctrines in the word of God, for whose farther explication we must wait till the "pouring down of the blessed Spirit from on high, when the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea; when the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun as the light of seven days."

In the mean time, if we yield our assent to what God has plainly revealed, and fulfil the practical parts of religion which God has plainly enjoined, we have no reason to doubt of our acceptance unto eternal life, and our safe removal and advancement to the upper blessed world. There we shall see the Redeemer face to face, and have the mysterious glories of his sacred person revealed to us, that we may pay him such celestial honours as are required of all the worshippers in those holy and happy regions. And when we shall join together in that joyful song, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive glory and blessing, for he has washed us from our sins in his own blood, and redeemed us unto God," we shall then be fully apprised of the nature of that worship which we pay to our Redeemer; and we shall no more dispute how far the man Jesus is admitted to a participation of these honours, who in union with the divine nature, *is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.*

DISSERTATIONS

RELATING TO

THE CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE

OF THE

TRINITY.

THE SECOND PART, VIZ.

IV. THE SENTIMENTS OF THE ANCIENT JEWS AND PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANS CONCERNING THE "LOGOS," OR WORD, COMPARED WITH SCRIPTURE.

V. OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

VI. OF THE USE OF THE WORD "PERSON," IN THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY.

VII. OF THE DISTINCTION OF PERSONS IN THE DIVINE NATURE; OR, A HUMBLE ESSAY TO ILLUSTRATE THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY, VIZ. THREE PERSONS AND ONE GOD.

THE PREFACE.

IT is not a matter of light or trivial concern to write upon the sacred article of the Trinity. Many of the glories of our holy religion are derived from it, and so much of this doctrine as is necessary to the safety of our souls is revealed with bright evidence in the word of God. The various and particular modes of explaining it can by no means be esteemed of equal importance with the doctrine itself: For men of wisdom, and learning, and exemplary piety, have fallen into different sentiments in this attempt: And there will always be room for further inquiry, while we abide in this feeble and imperfect state. Here, in this world, we see but a glimpse of many of the deep things of God, and they are discovered to us but "darkly, as in a glass."

Yet we are encouraged by a prophet, *Hosea* vi. 3, to *follow on to know the Lord;* and are required by an apostle, 2 *Peter* iii. 18, to *grow in grace, and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ.* A diligent Christian would seek daily to arrive at some clearer ideas of the great God, whom he adores, and the Redeemer, with whom he has entrusted all his immortal concerns; especially, when we have just reason to believe, that there is much sacred truth which lies yet concealed in the mines of Scripture, in the search whereof we may happily employ our labour and meditation; and since we have also ground to hope for the promised assistance of the blessed Spirit of God, who is appointed to guide his people into all truth, and to glorify our Saviour, by "taking of the things of Christ, and manifesting them to us," *John* xvi. 14.

And as we are encouraged by Scripture to seek a further acquaintance with the mysteries of the gospel, so we are sometimes constrained to it by the importunate objections of our opponents. There are, and have been, many writers, who will not allow it to be possible in any manner whatsoever, that true godhead should belong to each of the blessed Three. It seems proper, therefore, for some persons to endeavour to make it appear, that there is a possibility in the reason and nature of things, for true and eternal deity to be attributed to the Father, the Son, and Holy Spirit, without danger of those absurdities and inconsistencies which are pretended to arise thence. And though the *modus*, or peculiar manner of explaining this difficulty, be not necessary for every Christian to understand in order to his own salvation, yet the providence of God may sometimes make it necessary for those who are set for the defence of the faith to explain and vindicate this great point, as far as the holy Scripture furnishes us with any traces of divine light, and the powers of reason, under the conduct of Scripture, can afford us any assistance. And to encourage our search, we may reasonably hope there are several things in the gospel, which are not surrounded with such impenetrable shades and darkness, as the writings of men have sometimes represented them.

When I wrote that little treatise, intitled *The Christian Doctrine of the Trinity*, my design then was, only to give a plain and general account of what representations the Scripture made of the sacred Three. And as my chief purpose in that book was to exhibit this doctrine to private Christians in an easy view; so I declared in the title, that I had endeavoured to do this without the aid or incumbrance of any of those human schemes of explication, which had been contrived to solve the difficulties attending that doctrine. Yet it was no part of my intent utterly to renounce and abandon all those schemes and methods of explication, which pious and learned men had already given us, or which might hereafter be found out to relieve these difficulties.

For though it might be possible, in some measure, to avoid the mixture of human schemes, when the only purpose of the writer is to lay down the doctrine of the Scripture for the use of private Christians, yet when an ingenious and learned author shall raise a variety of objections to obscure, refute, and confound that which I call the scriptural doctrine itself, perhaps it is impossible to give a tolerable answer to those objections, without entering into some particular scheme of explication, and shewing in what manner the sacred Three may be one God, and thereby declaring in what manner those objections may be solved, and the difficulties removed.

Though I was not a stranger to the various human explications, when I wrote that treatise, yet I confess with freedom, I was not at that time engaged in any one particular scheme. I thought the general doctrine of Scripture was plain and evident, but as to the *modus* of it I was much in doubt: And upon that account I must acknowledge this benefit which I have received from the author of the *Sober Appeal to a Turk or an Indian*, which was written in answer to my book,* *viz.* That by the arguments which he uses, he has almost precluded, in my opinion, some of those schemes of explication, and inclined my thoughts towards one particular mode of accounting for this difficult doctrine, which I have in a great measure exhibited in the following discourses.

Such as know little of these disputes, and have never ventured to read any thing but the writers of their own side, generally imagine that all things in their own particular scheme are clear as the light; and they are too ready to impute all the doubts or difficulties that are raised on these subjects to the want of a true regard to truth. They believe their own particular mode of explaining this great article with as firm a faith, and make it as sacred and divine, as the article itself; and they suppose that their whole scheme is supported by all those Scriptures which are made use of to prove the deity of the Son or Spirit. So unhappily has the christian world been taught to mingle human schemes with divine truths. And I cannot but take notice here, if a man has never so sincere a design to vindicate the same great doctrines which are professed and maintained by his brethren, yet if he happen to step aside from the common tract of human phrases, and especially if he give an exposition of some important Scriptures different from their sentiments and the established interpretation, he runs the risk of having heresy cast on himself and his writings, even while he labours, by reasoning and clear ideas, to defend those very propositions which they themselves believe.

I know it is a very difficult and hazardous undertaking, for a man to attempt to give a rational account of these mysterious parts of our religion, though he endeavour humbly to follow the tract of scripture light; and there is much danger in it upon this account, as well as others, *viz.* That what scheme of explication soever he follows, there are some hard names, of modern or ancient error, which lie ready to be discharged upon him. If he explain the Trinity according to the ancient athanasians, with Bishop Pearson, Bishop Bull, and Mr. Howe, he is censured perhaps as a downright tritheist. If he follow the scholastic scheme, which has been professed by most of the reformed churches, and which has been commonly called *modern orthodoxy*, he incurs the charge of sabellianism. If he dare propose the doctrine of the pre-existent soul of Christ, and follow Bishop Fowler, Mr. Fleming, and others, he is accused of favouring the arian and nestorian errors, even though all this time he strongly maintains the proper deity of Christ, and a sufficient personality in the sacred Three to support their distinct characters and offices. It is hardly possible that the nicest care should

* Why I have not in these present Dissertations proceeded farther in a reply to that writer, I have given an account at the close of the Seventh Dissertation.

exempt a man from these inconveniencies: But I hope none of these things shall ever discourage me from the sincere pursuit of truth, nor provoke me to lay aside the exercise of christian candour and charity.

I think the doctrine of the proper deity of the Son and Spirit is supported by some convincing arguments drawn from the word of God, though the manner of explication is attended with much difficulty. Surely those who have well known the arian and socinian controversies, and have given themselves leave to be acquainted with the force of argument on all sides, must acknowledge that it would be an invaluable happiness to the christian world, if any hypothesis of explaining the Trinity were current among us, which might have clear and distinct ideas affixed to it, that we might not be perpetually running to this refuge, "it is all mysterious and inconceivable, and therefore we must not search into it."

I should be very glad, if a man might be permitted to imitate the blessed work of angels; 1 *Peter* i. 12; and might *desire to look into* the glorious things of Christ, without being suspected of a profane curiosity, or a violation of the faith. It is my opinion, that a fair, easy, and intelligible scheme of the trinitarian doctrine, agreeably to holy Scripture, would be the noblest and the securest guard against the arian and socinian errors, for then there would be no pretence to deny it.

A late anonymous writer on the doctrine of the Trinity assures us, that "there is a number of men who are prejudiced against, and do reject this weighty article, and many reject Christianity in general on its account, because they are persuaded it is expressly impossible, or contradictory, and inconsistent with reason. Many men labour under so strong a prepossession that this mystery is impossible, that till they be cured of this prejudice, by a sensible demonstration of the possibility of that abstruse doctrine, in some sense manifestly consistent with reason as well as Scripture, no other arguments can have any effect with them, or be duly weighed by them." This is one reason why I ventured into these inquiries; and if this great article could be well adjusted and represented in such distinct ideas as would remove all appearance of inconsistency, it would also better support protestant writers in their triumph over the inconsistent doctrines of popery, and particularly that of transubstantiation, without any fear of a retortion of the same charge upon ourselves. I know the papists retort this charge without reason or justice; but it must be confessed also, that it would be a happiness if we could cut off all shadows or pretences of occasion from those who seek this occasion against us.

Far be it from me to boast that I have exhibited such an hypothesis here! I know there are some difficulties which attend my explication of things. All that I can say is, that I have made an humble essay toward it, and how far I have succeeded herein, must be left to the impartial judgment of those who will take the pains to read it, and honestly compare it with the word of God. As for the conviction, or silencing of all manner of opponents, I make no pretence to it. It is a very just observation of the learned Doctor Waterland, in his preface to his *Sermons on the Deity of Christ*, "that in such sublime subjects as these, and in such controversies as depend on the interpretation of dead writings, the objector has much the easier part, as it is always easier to puzzle than to clear any thing; to darken and perplex than to set things in a good light; and to start difficulties than to solve them." Yet that I may not leave these dissertations utterly defenceless, I would attempt, in this place, to obviate a few exceptions that may be raised, though the reasons and foundations of them cannot be well understood till the discourses themselves have been perused.

Objection I. Perhaps it may be charged upon me, that I have not, in these dissertations, exactly confined myself, in every punctilio, to the same sentiments, which I had published some years ago, with relation to the Doctrine of the Trinity: And particularly, that though I continue to maintain the supreme deity of the Son and Spirit, yet that I have expressed the doctrine of their personality in stronger and more unlimited terms heretofore, than I have done in these papers.

Here let me first give one general answer, and then descend to particulars.

The general answer is this. When I apply myself with diligence to make further inquiries into the great doctrines of the gospel, I would never make my own former opinions the standard of truth, and the rule by which to determine my future judgment. My work is always to lay the Bible before me, to consult that sacred and infallible guide, and to square and adjust all my sentiments by that certain and unerring rule. It is to this supreme judge of controversies that I pay an unreserved submission, and would derive all further light from this fountain. I thank God, that I have learned to retract my former sentiments, and change them, when upon stricter search and review, they appear less agreeable to the divine standard of faith.

Though a sentence or two from any man's former writings may be cited, perhaps, to confront his later thoughts, yet that is not sufficient to refute them. All that it will prove is this, that that man keeps his mind ever open to conviction, and that he is willing and desirous to change a darker for a clearer idea. It will only declare to the world, that he can part with a mistake for the hope of truth, that he dares confess himself a fallible creature, and that his knowledge is capable of improvement. It becomes the all-wise God, and not mortal man, to be unchangeable. It doth not belong to such poor imperfect beings, as we are, to remain for ever immovable in all the same opinions that we have once indulged, nor to stamp every sentiment with immortality. For a man to be obstinately tenacious of an old mistake, and incorrigibly fond of any obscure phrase or conception, because he has once admitted it, is the shame, and not the glory of human nature. The particular answers to this objection, relating to the personality of the Son and Spirit, are as follow, *viz.*

Answer I. My design in writing *The Christian Doctrine of the Trinity*, was to represent, in the plainest manner, what appeared to be the most obvious ideas of Scripture concerning the sacred Three, for the use of private Christians. And as I supposed both their deity and their personality to be plainly exhibited in the letter of the Scripture, I represented them both in that manner in that little book, without so great a solicitude about reconciling the difficulties arising thence, as may be necessary for a person who undertakes further to explain that sacred doctrine, and to vindicate it against the exceptions of learned men. I think it also proper to acknowledge, that I was at that time inclined to suppose those personal representations in Scripture, especially so far as relates to the blessed Spirit, were really to be understood in a more proper and literal sense, than I now find necessary; and on that account I did then express the doctrine of three persons, or three distinct intelligent agents, in terms a little stronger, and more unlimited, than my judgment now approves. For since that time I have more carefully considered the jewish idioms of speech, wherein powers, virtues, and properties, are frequently personalised, or represented in a personal manner.

Answer II. As it was my purpose, in that little treatise, to shew, that the Scripture ascribes deity and personality both to the Word and to the Spirit, so the business of my present dissertations is to shew how these two may be reconciled. Now if personality and

deity can scarce be fairly explained, and happily reconciled in a proper literal sense, I think it much more agreeable to Scripture, to explain the deity ascribed to the Word and Spirit in a proper and literal sense, and to explain the personality in a figurative manner, than to construe the deity of the Word and Spirit into a mere figurative godhead, and sink their character into that of two creatures, in order to maintain their literal and proper personality.

Answer III. Let it be further considered, that the common scholastic explication of the doctrine of the Trinity, which for some centuries hath been called orthodox, makes the difference between the Father, the Word, and the Spirit, to consist in mere internal relative properties. This is the term which is generally used to describe their distinct personality: Whereas the present scheme, which I offer, supposes the Word and Spirit to be analogous to real distinct powers in the divine nature. Now a real distinction is something greater than that which is merely relative. I hope, therefore, that those trinitarians at least, who give their assent to the common orthodox scheme, will have no reason to charge me with making a less distinction between the divine persons than they do.

Objection II. Some persons, who pay a very great respect to the primitive christian fathers, may blame me, perhaps, for those parts of the Fourth Dissertation, wherein I allow so many of the inferior and diminutive expressions of those ancients concerning the *Logos* to be construed in their own proper literal sense, and apply them to the human soul of Christ in its pre-existent state.

Answer. Let it be observed, in the first place, that I have every where allowed the greatest, the brightest, and the strongest expressions of the ancients, concerning the true and proper godhead of our Saviour, to be construed according to their proper and genuine sublime ideas. I reverence the name and memory of Bishop Bull and Bishop Pearson, whose excellent writings have effectually proved, that those primitive fathers did generally believe the true and eternal deity of Christ. And I pay all due honours to the learned labours of the reverend Doctor Waterland and Doctor Knight, who have supported the same cause, and have given me an occasion to review the writers of the most early ages of Christianity, whereby I have had the pleasure to find such a number of citations applied in this controversy with great justice; and it must be confessed, that they have so far exhausted this subject, that I could meet with very few expressions of importance on this theme, in those ancients which I consulted, which had not been cited in some of their writings, or the writings of their learned antagonists. I have therefore struck out many of the citations that I had made, both relating to the divinity and to the inferior nature of Christ, that I might not too largely repeat what had been done before: And would rather remit the reader to those worthy authors, who have plentifully given us the various expressions of the fathers in this controversy.

I thankfully acknowledge the profit I have received from the labours of those who, with so much skill and learning, have defended the common faith: And heartily declare my agreement with them, that the doctrine of the godhead of Christ was asserted and maintained by the fathers of the christian church. Yet, with all due deference to their superior worth, I humbly take leave to answer the objections which the modern disbelievers of his proper godhead have derived from the fathers, in another manner than most* of these writers have done. Their arguments for the deity of Christ are, in my

* I say, most of these writers; for I know not any of them who has laid a foundation for the answer of these difficulties in the same manner as I have done, except the reverend author of the *Considerations on Mr. Whiston's Historical Preface*, in his first and second *Letters to the Author of the History of Montanism*, whose expressions on this subject, in several parts of those letters, I have here cited, in proper places, with all due respect.

opinion, strong and conclusive; but surely it may be lawful to attempt the relief of difficulties in another way and manner, since their opponents have ever denied their solution of them to have been satisfactory.

While we all agree to support the same doctrine of the deity of our blessed Lord, I think every man may be also permitted, without offence, to solve the objections that are brought against this doctrine, in such a various manner as is most suited to our different apprehensions of things; and by such a variety of solutions the doctrine itself, perhaps, may be better guarded against assaults on every side.

To conclude, I have nothing more to request of my readers, but that they would give themselves leave to peruse these dissertations with due attention, and without prejudice, or not to peruse them at all. That they would not take offence at every inaccurate expression, and condemn the whole work for some incidental mistakes. I entreat that they would not set their invention at work, to oppose as fast as they read, lest such a temper should bar all the avenues of the soul against conviction and evidence. That must be glaring evidence indeed, and an argument of prodigious power, that forces its way into an unwilling mind; I pretend to no such skill or demonstration.

If I have set any part of this subject in an easy light, agreeable to reason and Scripture, I hope there may be some readers disposed to receive it. I entreat them to believe that it is possible for some of them to have been mistaken, as well as myself, in our former modes and schemes of explication of this great doctrine of the Trinity, though the doctrine itself stands unshaken, and our assent to it as firm as ever. It is possible that an article which has had so many difficulties and obscurities attending it in all ages, may be a little further cleared and disentangled by labour and prayer, and the daily study of the holy Scriptures. And if the blessing of God shall so far attend these feeble endeavours, as to lead any of my fellow Christians into clearer and more defensible ideas of these deep things of God, let them join with me, and give the glory to God the Father, and his Son Jesus Christ, who, according to the divine economy, instructs humble inquirers by the blessed Spirit.

But if it appear that I am mistaken in this hypothesis, I shall be very ready to receive a happier scheme of explication, wherein the doctrine of the sacred Three may be represented, both in their divine nature and distinct personality, in a clearer light, and whereby this doctrine may be rescued with more glory and power from all the attacks that have been made upon it. Happy are the souls above, who see God face to face, who behold the sacred Three in that divine light, where objections and darkness are banished for ever, and the shadows are fled away! The noise of controversy and wrangling is never heard in those regions; but if it were possible for the happy inhabitants to differ in sentiment, and controversy could ascend thither, I am persuaded it would be managed without wrangling or noise. The gentleness and benevolence, the sweet serenity and candour, that adorn every spirit there, would reign through all their sacred reasonings; and wheresoever a mistake was found and rectified, among those holy disputants, the voice of joy and triumph would be heard on all sides at the bright and lovely appearance of truth. O that the disputes of Christians on earth might be carried on with the same heavenly candour, and might end in the same harmony and joy! Amen.

May 8, 1725.

DISSERTATION IV.

THE SENTIMENTS OF THE ANCIENT JEWS AND PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANS CONCERNING THE "LOGOS," OR WORD, COMPARED WITH SCRIPTURE.

SECTION I.

THE GENERAL SENSES OF THE TERM "LOGOS," AND ITS APPLICATION TO CHRIST.

OUR blessed Saviour hath a variety of names and titles given him in Scripture, to describe his personal glories, and his sacred offices in the divine economy.

These must be borrowed from human things, and from the languages of men, in order to bring them within the reach of our understandings. We cannot frame ideas of things divine and heavenly, as they are in themselves, and therefore it hath pleased God to condescend to lead us into some imperfect conceptions of them, by revealing them to us, under the names and resemblances of things on earth.

The *Logos*, or *Word of God*, is a name whereby Christ is often represented in the New Testament, and particularly in the writings of St. John. Now it may assist us considerably in tracing out some of the glories of his person, if we search into the meaning of this name, and the reason of its application to our blessed Lord.

The term *logos*, in greek heathen authors, does not only signify *word*, but it is used as commonly to express *reason*. In this sense the platonic philosophers apply it to God as well as man.

And not only the ancient Greeks, but Philo the Jew uses the term *logos* in this latter sense, even when it is applied to God; and denotes hereby *the reason*, or *wisdom of God*. In his treatise *De Mundi Opificio*, he tells us, that the *idea* by which God made the world, and which he calls the κόσμος νοητός, or the κόσμος ἐκ τῶν ἰδεῶν, that is, the *ideal*, or *intelligible world*, could have no place but in the *logos* of God, as an intelligible or ideal city is in the mind, or reason, of the architect. And he adds, a little afterward, that "if a man will use plain words, he will say, the ideal world is nothing else than the *logos* of God the Creator; as an ideal city is nothing else than the reasoning of the builder; ὁ τῆς ἀρχιτέκτονος λογισμός. And this opinion," saith he, "I have from Moses, and not from myself. The archetypal exemplar, the idea of ideas, is the *logos*, the word, of God." He sometimes supposes it to be a divine power, or δύναμις, that regulates or conducts the agency of other powers, *viz.* principality and goodness, which office particularly belongs to the divine reason, or wisdom. And in several places of his writings, he seems to put such a sense upon this term, the logos of God, as we most properly refer to divine wisdom, or reason.

It is plain also, that several of the primitive christian writers include, if not chiefly intend, the idea of reason, in some places where they speak of that divine *logos*, which

was always *with God*, even from eternity: For it was a common notion among them, that God was always λογικὸς, that is, *rational;* never ἄλογος, or ἄσοφος, that is, *irrational*, never without his word, or, rather, his reason, or wisdom. Tertullian makes the *logos* to be eternal, as it signifies *reason;* and more ancient than the *logos*, as it signifies a *word* or *speech:* His language is this, *Non sermonalis Deus à principio sed rationalis Deus etiam ante principium.* That several of the Greek fathers speak of the *logos* as divine wisdom, is manifest, and that some of the latin fathers, both elder and later, use the terms *ratio* and *sapientia* to express the *logos*, as well as *verbum*, or *sermo*, I suppose will not be denied.

And even in Scripture, the term *logos* sometimes seems to denote *reason* as well as *word;* for Christ, who is the *Logos*, or Word of God, in several Scriptures, is also supposed to be represented by *divine wisdom* in other places of the sacred writings, both in the Old and New Testament: As *Prov.* viii. where wisdom is described, which whole chapter is generally interpreted concerning our blessed Saviour, in his pre-existent state. Luke vii. 34, 35, *The Son of man is come eating and drinking, and ye say, Behold—a wine-bibber, &c. but wisdom is justified of all her children.* Luke xi. 49, *Therefore also said the wisdom of God, I will send them prophets, &c.* that is, the eternal word, or wisdom, by whom God transacted his affairs of the government of the jewish church.

And, indeed, there is a plain affinity between both these senses of *logos;* for a word or speech is but the external representation of inward thought or reason; and reason itself is but a sort of internal speech, or the language of the mind. Thus by one we speak inwardly to ourselves, and by the other we speak to other persons. And therefore Christ, who is the divine wisdom, *Prov.* viii. is also the divine Word, *John* i. manifesting the wisdom of God; and the name *logos* implies both. So Calvin, both in his *Institutions*, and his *Commentaries on John* i. 1, represents Christ as the *Logos*, partly because he is the wisdom of God, and partly because he reveals the mind of God to men. "John," saith he, "calls the Son of God, *sermo, quia primùm æterna sit Dei sapientia et voluntas, deinde expressa consilii ejus effigies.*" And many other writers are of the same mind.

Yet I think in our theological discourses on the Messiah, since we have not one single term in English that signifies both *reason* and *word*, it may be proper generally to translate *logos* by the term *word*, rather than *reason*.

I. Because the Scripture in the New Testament seems rather to favour this sense: For the same things which are attributed to *logos* in some Scriptures, are in other places ascribed to ῥῆμα: Now ῥῆμα always signifies *word*.

II. Because the same term *logos* is used by the jewish writers to translate their *memra*, which properly and literally signifies *a word*, and which is much used in their theological writings. If we inquire into the origin of it, perhaps it may be this, *viz.*

Moses relates the work of each day in the creation, to be performed by God's speaking: Gen. i. *And God said.* This might give them the first hint or notion of *the word*, or *memra*, as a medium of God's manifestations and operations. And perhaps, it might be thus designed by the Spirit of God, since it appears that succeeding inspired writers copied after Moses. Psalm xxxiii. 6, *By the word of the Lord were the heavens made.* Psalm cxlviii. 5, *He commanded, and they were created.* *Psalm* cxlvii 15, 18, &c. "He sendeth forth his word, and melteth the ice." *Psalm* cv. 19, "The

word of the Lord came and tried Joseph." And the frequent mention of *the word of the Lord* in the Old Testament, which came to the patriarchs and prophets, might give the Jews further occasion to speak of the *memra*, or *word*. Such ancient divine hints probably introduced this term so often into their theology, and by that means into the writings of the New Testament.

III. Another reason why we interpret *logos*, the *word*, is because this has been the most frequent translation of *logos* in most places, by the writers of the christian church, in all ages; which has something of weight in it, where we can see no sufficient ground to change.

IV. Because when *logos* is translated *word* or *speech*, it includes *reason:* But reason does not include word.

V. The term *word* is more adapted to signify both the human and divine natures of Christ; whereas *reason* or *wisdom* seems rather to refer chiefly to his divine nature, as will appear in the following parts of this discourse. And, indeed, where the divine nature alone is intended, I cannot think it amiss, in some cases, to imitate some of the fathers and former writers, and to translate it *reason*, or *wisdom;* as in other cases it should be construed *the Word.*

But let us more particularly consider the import of the term *logos*, when it signifies a *word*, and the reasons of the application of it to Christ.

Logos, or *word*, when used in human affairs, is a declaration of our mind or will; and when it is taken for a word of command from a superior, it becomes also a medium of operation as well as manifestation. And so when it is used in a divine sense, it primarily and properly denotes some declaration of the mind or will of God; but if it be put for a word of divine efficacious command, then it denotes a medium of divine operation.

Therefore when the term *word* is taken personally as well as divinely, it must denote some glorious person, by whom God reveals himself, his mind, and will to creatures, and by whom he operates. In short, it is a personal representation of some glorious medium of God's manifestations and operations.

Now this character eminently agrees to our blessed Saviour: And it is reasonably supposed, that it is upon these accounts chiefly he is so often called *the logos*, as it signifies *word.*

I. As he was the medium of divine manifestation. So Irenæus speaks *Libro* II. *Capite* LVI. "The Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is revealed and manifested to angels and archangels, to principalities and powers, and to men, by his Word, who is his Son: The Son reveals the Father to all to whom the Father is revealed." So John i. 18, *The only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.*

II. As he was a medium of divine operation. So Irenæus expresses himself, "The Word ministers to the Father in all things: He made all things by his Word;" *Libro* IV. *Capite* XVII. XXXVII. So St. Paul and St John explain each other, when they describe God the Father as creating all things *by his Word*, and *by Jesus Christ;* John i. 3. Ephes. iii. 9.

Upon a review of the whole, we find that the *logos* is the divine wisdom itself, a revealer of the divine wisdom, a medium of divine manifestations and divine transactions: And on these accounts it is probable, that our blessed Saviour first obtained, and still keeps the name of *logos*, or *word*, since his incarnation, as well as before.

Christ is called *the logos* in his incarnate state; 1 *John* i. 1, 2, "The *logos*, or Word of life, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled;" *Rev.* xix. 13, he is represented as *clothed with a vesture dipped in blood, and his name is called the* logos, or *Word of God.* Nor does the apostle John only use this language, but the evangelist Luke seems to speak the same dialect, in the second verse of his gospel, when he calls the apostles *eye-witnesses and ministers of the* logos, or *Word:* For if the term *logos* be not taken in its personal sense, it is an improper way of speaking, to call them eye-witnesses instead of ear-witnesses.

It is manifest also, that the term *logos* has sometimes a peculiar reference to our blessed Saviour, considered as distinct from flesh and blood, and is so used in those Scriptures which speak of him in his pre-existent state. The beginning of St. John's gospel puts this beyond all doubt, if there were no other testimony. *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.—All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.—And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory,* John i. 1, 2, 3, 14.

There are many other places also, which may be fairly and reasonably interpreted concerning our blessed Saviour, as expressed by the term *logos*, which Mr. Fleming reckons up, *Christology*, Volume I. page 155, &c. As *John* v. 38, "Ye have not the Word of God, or *logos*, abiding in you; for whom the Father has sent, him ye receive not." *Titus* i. 2, 3, "God, who hath promised eternal life of old times, hath now manifested his Word, or *logos*, through preaching." Heb. iv. 12, 13, *The* logos, or *Word of God is quick and powerful,—a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart: Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight.* 2 Peter iii. 5, 7, *By the* logos, or *Word of God, the heavens were of old;* and *by the same Word, the heavens and earth are kept in store, reserved unto fire.* 1 John v. 7, *There are Three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Spirit, and these three are One:* With some other texts.

SECTION II.

A DIFFICULTY MENTIONED, WITH A PROPOSAL FOR THE SOLUTION OF IT.

Now concerning this *logos*, or the pre-existent nature of Christ, or rather concerning Christ, or *the logos*, in his pre-existent state, there are such glorious ascriptions given to him, as seem to raise him above the character of all creatures, *viz.* that "he was God," *John* i. 1; that "all things were created by him and for him, whether in heaven or in earth;" that "he is before all things, and by him all things consist," *Col.* i. 16, 17; that "he upholds all things by the word of his power;" that "all the angels of God must worship him;" that "his throne, as God, is for ever and ever;" and that "in the beginning he laid the foundations of the earth; and the heavens are the work of his hands," &c. *Heb.* i. 3, 6, 8, 10.

Yet in these very places of Scripture, as well as in several other texts, there are some expressions, which seem to represent him, even in his pre-existent state, below the dignity of godhead: As when he is called *the Son of God*, and said to be *begotten of the Father;* which seems to denote too much derivation and dependence for pure deity; when he is said to be "appointed the heir of all things by his Father;" when he is called

the first-born of every creature, and *the beginning of the creation of God;* when he is said to be "sent by his Father, not to do his own will, but the will of him that sent him;" that "he had a body prepared him by the Father;" that "the Son can do nothing of himself:" And many other expressions of the same kind.

Now here lies the difficulty, how shall we interpret all these expressions in a consistency with each other? This has been a perplexing and laborious inquiry in all ages of Christianity.

Most writers fix their eyes and thoughts so entirely upon the divine dignity of the person of Christ; and out of a holy fear of sinking his character below godhead, have explained many of these diminishing expressions, as mere economical accounts of his sublimest nature, and attributed even these lessening characters to Christ considered as God, by the help of tropes and figures, by catechreses and economical interpretations.

On the other hand, there have been some, who out of a sacred veneration for the supreme majesty of God the Father, and in order to secure the unity of the godhead, have sunk all the sublimer and divine characters given to Christ, or *the logos*, in his preexistent state, and reduced them to some diminished and figurative sense, in order to reconcile them to the inferior characters of Christ; and thereby they have not suffered the person of Christ, in any sense, to arise to the true dignity of godhead.

This has been a matter of dreadful contest in the churches of old, and has been again revived in the present age. The Scriptures have been consulted through and through, by each party; and yet there are some difficulties still attending the sacred subject, and the parties are not reconciled.

I grant that Scripture is the best interpreter of itself, and by comparing one part of the word of God with another, we are led into the meaning of many a difficult text, and find out many an important truth: And, in my esteem, the foregoing difficulties are resolved by the Scripture itself. But when persons have employed their labour in this manner, and there still remains a darkness in their opinion, upon the language of Scripture, they may, perhaps, derive some degrees of light, by consulting the authors that wrote on the same subject, and lived nearest to that age when the Scriptures were written.

And since the christian religion is built upon the same general foundations with the jewish, and the New Testament is a divine comment upon the Old; perhaps we may borrow some advantages for the interpretation of dark passages in the gospel, from the modes of speech, and the common sentiments of the Jews in that age; as well as from the primitive fathers of the christian church, who lived nearest to the apostolic times.

It may be also observed, that the sacred writers of the New Testament were Jews themselves; and though they were converted to the faith of Christ, yet it is very evident, that they used several peculiar words and phrases according to the sense and meaning of their countrymen, and brought several of the idioms of the Hebrew language into their Greek writings: This is agreed among all the learned. Upon these accounts the ancient Jews, as well as the first Christians, may give us their assistance toward the better understanding of these terms and expressions, *the Word of God, the Son of God*, &c. and add some light to that doctrine which we derive from Scripture.

SECTION III.

THE SENTIMENTS OF THE ANCIENT JEWS CONCERNING THE LOGOS, VIZ. THE APOCRYPHAL WRITERS, THE TARGUMISTS, AND PHILO THE JEW.

Since *Logos*, or *the Word*, is a name frequently given to our blessed Saviour, by the sacred writers of the New Testament; since he is also called *the Son of God* frequently; let us therefore inquire a little what sentiments the ancient Jews had of this matter, and what they meant by the *logos;* and in what sense he is the Son of God?

The books of the Old Testament speak of the Son of God: Psalm ii. 7, *Thou art my Son;* Psalm lxxxix. 27, *I will make him my first-born;* Prov. xxx. 4, *What is his name, or what is his Son's name?* They speak also of the *word* and *wisdom* of God, which the ancient christian fathers understood as denoting Christ. *Prov.* viii. where he is called *wisdom,* has been cited already: See *Psalm* xxxiii. 6, where "the heavens were made by the word of God;" *Psalm* cvii. 20, "God sent forth his word and healed the people," &c. Which *word* the seventy jewish interpreters call *the logos.*

Upon this account the jewish writers of the apocryphal books speak of the word and wisdom of God in the same manner; *Ecclus.* i. 1, 4, 5, 9, 10, "All wisdom cometh from the Lord, and is with him for ever. Wisdom hath been created before all things: He poured her out upon all his works. The word of God in the highest, is the fountain of wisdom." Πηγὴ σοφίας λόγος Θεοῦ ἐν ὑψίστοις: By which, it is probable, the author does not mean the written word, but the *logos,* or Word that dwells on high. *Verse* 10, "She is with all flesh according to his gift." Now these expressions are very much akin to the beginning of St. John's gospel: *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God. All things were* created *by him. This was the light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.* So in the *Book of Wisdom,* chapter xvi. 12, "It was neither herb, nor mollifying plaster, that restored them to health; but thy word, O Lord, which healeth all things:" So *Wisdom* xviii. 15, 16, 17, "Thy almighty Word * leaped down from heaven, out of thy royal throne, as a fierce man of war, into the midst of a land of destruction, and brought thy unfeigned commandment as a sharp sword, and standing up filled all things with death; and it touched the heaven, but it stood upon the earth." *Chap.* ix. 1, "O God of my fathers, who hast made all things with thy word." *Verse* 4, "Wisdom sitteth by thy throne." And *chapter* vii. 21, &c. "Wisdom is called the breath of the power of God; a pure influence flowing from the glory of the Almighty; the worker of all things; the brightness of the everlasting light; the image of the goodness of God." To which it is supposed the apostle might allude, *Heb.* i. 3, when he calls Christ "the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person." And it is probable that the author of *Ecclesiasticus* gives an intimation of the Son of God, *chapter* li. 14, "And I called upon the Lord, the Father of my Lord."

From all these citations we may derive this degree of light, that the writers of the

* This almighty Word, Λόγος παντοδύναμος, may mean *the essential divine Word,* or it may be referred to the glorious archangel, called *Logos,* armed with almightiness by the indwelling godhead, that is, the Angel of the covenant, who is also Jehovah, and true God. Of which hereafter more particularly.

New Testament do not imitate the language of Plato, or other heathen philosophers, when they describe the *logos*, the word of God, or his wisdom, and that sometimes in a personal manner; but rather that they follow the language of Scripture, and of the jewish church: And that they had many hints from the Old Testament itself, as well as from their traditional expositions of it, as Dr. Allix informs us, that their great expected Messiah was to be the Son of God, and the Word of God, as being the fittest characters of a person who was to represent the wisdom and grace of God amongst them; and to be an illustrious medium of divine manifestations and operations.

It is allowed, indeed, that Plato may call the divine impressions on the works of nature, λόγοι, or *words;* and he spake of the λόγος, the *word*, or *reason* of the Creator: But it is much more probable, from ancient history, that Plato, and other Grecians, borrowed that term from converse with the Jews, or their neighbours the Phœnicians, and the Chaldeans,* than that the Jews should borrow it from him or them; or that St. John, who was a poor jewish fisherman, should be acquainted with the grecian learning of the gentiles, and imitate their phrases, when the same phrases were more common and ancient in his own nation.

I proceed now to consider what we find concerning the Word, and the Son of God, in the jewish commentaries on Scripture which are called *the Targums*.

Here I shall make a free acknowledgment, that what I cite upon this occasion is borrowed chiefly from Dr. Allix, Dr. Owen, Dr. Lightfoot, Mr. Ainsworth, and Mr. Fleming. My acquaintance with the chaldean or rabbinical language was never sufficient to read the rabbies, or their comments on Scripture: But I may reasonably presume, that these learned authors have made faithful citations from these jewish writers, and given a just account of their sentiments.

The Targums are paraphrases, or explanations of several parts of the Old Testament, in the chaldee language, written by Onkelos, Jonathan, &c. The exact time of their writing is not agreed amongst the learned, but generally supposed to be in the same century wherein Christ lived, or at least in the next century following: They speak very frequently concerning the *memra* or *the word of God*, which is the same with the *logos;* and they make it to signify these several things:

I. The *word* or *memra*, in these writings, often signifies God himself. There is a great number of places, in which, when the hebrew Bible declares that God, or the Lord, spake or acted any thing, these commentators ascribe those speeches, actions, &c. to the *memra*, or *word*. It was *the voice of the* word † of the *Lord God walking in the garden*, that Adam heard: It was "the word of the Lord," was with the lad Ishmael, and helped him in the wilderness. It is "by the word of the Lord their God I will save them," says the Targum; where Hosea says, *I will save them by* Jehovah *their God;*

* Grotius on *John* i. 1, affirms that "the Greeks cite the creation of the sun and moon, by the word, out of the ancient books of the Chaldees:" And that the writer of the *Orpheic Verses* thence borrowed his Θεῖος λόγος, and his αυδὴ πατρὸς, the *divine word*, and the *voice of the Father*, whereby he made the world. That learned author, Mr. Theophilus Gale, in his *Court of the Gentiles*, Part II. Book III. Chapters III. and IX. has shewn at large how Plato borrowed his notions originally from the Jews, by the Pythagoreans, the Egyptians, and Phœnicians: And many other very learned men have been of the same mind.

† This is the first place in the Bible where the *Targums* mention the *memra* of Jehovah; and it is remarkable that the text itself mentions the *voice of God walking*, before any word was spoken: Whence Dr. Owen infers, that this expression may denote the essential Word of God, the person of the Son. See *First Volume on Hebrews*, pages 114, 116.

Hosea i. 7. It was *the word* that saved Noah in the time of the flood, and made a covenant with him. It was *the word* that brought Abraham out of Chaldea, and commanded him to sacrifice, and in whom Abraham believed. It is *the word* that redeems Israel out of Egypt, and against whom Israel murmured. It is *the word* whose presence is promised in the tabernacle; whose protection was promised to Moses, when he desired to see God. It is *the word* whose commandments the Israelites were carefully to observe. It is *the word* that dwelt in the pillar of a cloud, and led Israel through the wilderness, and that spake out of the fire at Horeb. It is *the word* that created the world, that made man after his image, that spoke to Adam in the garden; that lifted up Enoch to heaven; and that talked with Moses in the tabernacle. It is *the word* to whom Moses prays, and who gives statutes to Israel. *The word* sent fiery serpents, and punished Israel for their various crimes. *The word* said, "he had sworn to give Israel the land of Canaan;" and where the Scripture says to Abraham, *By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord,* there both Onkelos and Jonathan interpret it, "By my word have I sworn, saith the Lord." See Dr. Allix's *Judgment of the ancient Jewish Church,* Chapters XII. XIII. See Dr. Lightfoot's *Harmony of the Evangelists,* on John i. 1; and *Horæ Hebraicæ in Locum.*

That God himself is often signified by the *memra,* or *word,* appears further by the use of the same term with regard to men also; as Jonathan Ben Uzziel, on *Numb.* xv. 32. "A certain man said with his word, I will go forth, and gather sticks on the sabbath-day;" where "he said with his word," signifies "he resolved in his mind," or "with himself." *Job* vii. 8, "Thy eyes are upon my *memra,*" that is, "upon me." So "my breath is in my *memra,*" *Job* xxvii. 3, that is, "my breath is in me." "There is a league between my *memra* and thee," 2 *Chron.* xvi. 3, that is, "between me and thee." See Fleming's *Christology,* Vol. I. page 137, and Lightfoot's *Horæ Hebraicæ et Talmudicæ, in John* i. 1; where they bring other undeniable instances, to prove the *memra* sometimes is nothing else but a chaldeism, denoting *one's self:* So *the word of God* sometimes denotes "God himself."

II. The *memra,* or *word of God,* in these jewish writings is used to signify any thing in or of God, whereby he transacts his divine affairs: It implies some one or more of his attributes, or his powers, his knowledge, his wisdom, his purpose, his command, his efficacy, his providence, or his influence; and where the hebrew text metaphorically ascribes human affections and human members to God, the Targums use the word *memra,* and thus it signifies *his head, his face, his mind, his tongue, his mouth, his eye, his hand,* or *his feet:* In general it means that "divine power and wisdom," or, in one word, that "sufficiency of God," which he exerts in managing human affairs, or in revealing himself to the children of men. One Targum saith, "God created the world by his word;" where the other Targum saith, "by his wisdom;" *Gen.* i. 1. So "the Lord gave Noah warning by his word;" "the Lord judged the old world by his word;" and said, "I will destroy them by my word." And a great variety of such expressions may be found in Dr. Allix's *Judgment of the ancient Jewish Church,* and Mr. Fleming's *Christology,* in the places before cited.

Here let it be noted, that it is the custom of the jewish writers, even the penmen of the Bible, as well as other authors, to represent powers, attributes, virtues, agencies, &c. in a personal manner, and to describe them as distinct persons. Upon this account, in some places where the *memra* may be supposed to signify the divine sufficiency, or

some particular distinction of power or property in the godhead, it is represented in a personal manner by these jewish commentators. Whether they had a distinct idea of the *logos*, or *word*, as a second personal agent in the divine nature, according to the complete ideas of the athanasian explication, is a matter too doubtful to be asserted with any great assurance.

III. The term *memra* is used by these targumists for that angel who appeared to the patriarchs and to Moses, and assumed the name of *God* and *Jehovah*. It is the Word of the Lord that appeared often, as an angel, to Abraham, in the valley of vision; and Abraham worshipped, and prayed to the Word of the Lord in these appearances. When the angel of the Lord appeared to Hagar, the Targums say, "she confessed before the Lord Jehovah, whose Word had spoken unto her; and she prayed to the Word of the Lord, who had appeared to her." When Jacob returned from Padan-aram, the Word of the Lord, which in Scripture is called *a man*, appeared to him the second time, and blessed him. When the angel of the Lord in Scripture is said to appear unto Moses in the burning bush, it is said in the Targums, "the Word of the Lord spake to Moses there." It was the Word of the Lord that appeared against the Egyptians at midnight, and his right-hand killed the first-born of Egypt; which Moses ascribes to an angel. And in several other places, where the Scripture speaks of an angel, as appearing and assuming any divine character, these commentators introduce the *memra*.

Now let it be noted, that it was a current opinion among the Jews, that there was one great archangel, superior to all the rest of the angels in power and dignity, and whom God created or generated before all the others, in whom he put his own name, and whom he employed in most of his important affairs which related to the patriarchs, and to his own people the Jews. This was the angel whom, the Jews say, God promised to send before his people, *Exod.* xxiii. 20, 21, to keep them in the way, and to bring them to the promised land: *Beware of him*, (says God) *and obey his voice, provoke him not, for he will not pardon your* iniquities, *for my name is in him.* They say, this was the angel who wrestled with Jacob, and is called *a man*, *Gen.* xxxii. 24. Some of the ancient rabbies acknowledge him to be the Messiah, and call him the angel Michael. It is the same angel, who going before the camp of Israel in the wilderness, in the pillar of cloud, *Exod.* xiv. 19, removed and went behind them in the Red Sea, who by the rabbies is called Michael the great prince; he was made a wall of fire between the Israelites and the Egyptians. This is Michael the great archangel, the prince of Israel; *Dan.* x. 13, 21. *Rev.* xii. 7. See Ainsworth *on the Pentateuch.* This Michael is that high-priest of heaven, who offers up the prayers of the righteous, so Rabbi Menahem: He is the priest above, that offereth or presenteth the souls of the righteous, saith another of their rabbies. See Dr. Owen's *Exercitations on the Hebrews*, Vol. I. page 121.

There was an angel who was called *metatron*, which Dr. Owen supposes to be a corrupt expression of the Latin *mediator*, who by the rabbies is called "the prince of the world," "the prince of God's presence," "the master or teacher of Moses himself:" He is the angel always appearing in the presence of God, of whom it is said, *my name is in him.* Bechai, a great master among them, affirms, when he treats on *Exod.* xxiii. that his name *Metatron* signifies both *a lord, a messenger*, and *a keeper*. A *lord*, because he ruleth all; a *messenger*, because he stands always before God, to do his will; and a *keeper*, because he keepeth Israel. Some of the Jews have called him "the chancellor of

heaven," because he blotteth out the sins of Israel. See Dr. Owen *on the Hebrews*, Vol. I. *Exercitations*, page 123, and *Exposition*, page 75.

And as the Jews suppose this angel to have the name of God in him, and to be one in whom God dwelt, and by whom God transacted his affairs, so it seems to be the same being whom the ancient Jews before Christ, call the *Shechinah*, that is, "the habitation of God;" and they sometimes denote this *Shechinah* by the names *memra* and *logos*. They attribute the same things to this *Shechinah*, which they attribute to the word of God. They call the *Shechinah* the *Adam of above*, after whose image Adam was created. They say, that God having committed to angels the care of other nations, the *Shechinah* alone was entrusted with the care and conduct of Israel. They acknowledge the *Shechinah* to be that very angel whom Jacob calls "his Redeemer," and whom the prophets call the "angel of the presence," and "the angel of the covenant." This was that *Shechinah* who took possession of the tabernacle and the temple in the form of light and glory, and resided in the holy of holies. See more in Dr. Allix's *Judgment of the Jewish Church*, Chap. XI.

I confess, the Jews sometimes represent this *Shechinah* to signify the Holy Spirit: But it is no wonder that the imperfect notices which they had of the sacred doctrine of the Trinity might be paraphrased, explained, and commented upon, with some confusion both of names and things: Though what they have left upon record gives us sufficient hints of a certain glorious angelic being, who had also godhead dwelling in him.

The LXX jewish translators of the Bible seem to have had some notion of this glorious archangel, and suppose him to be the Messiah, whom they call the *child born*, the *son given*, Isaiah ix. 6; μεγάλης βουλῆς ἄγγελος, *the angel of the great council*, while they ascribe to God, or Jehovah, who is *great in counsel*, Jeremiah xxxii. 19, the title of κύριος μεγάλης βουλῆς, *Lord of the great council*.

It is to this archangel that Maimonides refers, when he says, "the angel, the prince of the world, of whom the wise masters so often speak." More *Nevochim*, Part II. Chap. VI. *Nye against Allix*, page 76.

He that would read more of these testimonies and citations out of the Targums, let him consult the 12th, 13th, and following chapters of Dr. Allix's *Judgment of the ancient Jewish Church*, and Fleming's *Christology*, and Dr. Owen's *Exercitations on the Hebrews*, particularly the 9th and 10th.

IV. The *memra*, or *word*, is sometimes described by them as "the Son of God;" so the *Targum of Jerusalem; Gen.* iii. 22, "The Word of Jehovah said, Here Adam whom I created is the only begotten son in the world, as I am the only begotten Son in the high heaven." *Allix*, page 268. Dr. Allix also shews, that they called the Messiah "the Son of God," as on *Psalm* lxxx. 15, where the Psalmist says, *the branch that thou madest strong for thyself*, the Targum reads the words, "for thy Son's sake," and interprets them, "even for the sake of king Messias." This seems to be intimated in other places of the Targums, and in other ancient jewish writings: And it is sufficiently manifest, that the Jews, in the days of our Saviour, supposed the Messiah to be the Son of God; *Matt.* xxvi. 63, 64. *Luke* xxii. 70; though it does not so evidently appear by any of these jewish writings, as Dr. Allix imagines, that they believed the Messiah to be a Son in the godhead itself. This leads me on to the next particular.

V. *Memra* is sometimes used by these jewish authors to signify *the Messiah*. Dr. Allix hath spent a good part of his 16th chapter in the proof of this subject, and there

is some weight in it: Though it must be acknowledged his proofs in this point are not so evident and express as one would expect, nor sufficient alone to convince an impartial and close inquirer. The learned Mr. Fleming therefore, acknowledging the insufficiency of Dr. Allix's allegations, ran through the targums himself, in those places where he thought it most probable to find any thing of this nature. See *Christology*, Vol. I. page 139; and at last he fell upon some passages that seemed very plainly to relate to the Messiah. One is this, *Gen.* xlix. 18, "My soul waits for thy salvation, O God;" which the Jerusalem Targum paraphrases thus, "My soul expects not the redemption of Gideon, which is a temporal salvation, nor the redemption of Samson, which is a transient salvation, but the redemption which thou didst promise should come through thy *memra* to thy people:" Which being compared with the context in the Targum, shews, that he means the redemption that should come through the Messiah. And, indeed, this is the chief proof that the targums any where by the *memra* can mean the Messiah, *viz.* that what they attribute to the *memra* in one place, they attribute to the Messiah in another, for both these names are frequent in their writings. The defence of this application of the names, see in Fleming's *Christology*, Vol. I. page 141, 142.

Yet this learned author would have it noted also, that there are some few passages in the targums, wherein it is as plain, that the Messiah is distinguished from the *memra* of God; as where it is said, "Moses shall go forth from the desert, and the king Messiah from Rome, and the *Memra* of God shall be leader between them both," &c. But then he gives this reason for it, that *Memra* denotes Christ with relation to his divine subsistence, and before his assumption of human nature, and *the Messiah* denotes him only as he was to appear visibly and become man, and therefore these authors generally distinguish the one from the other, page 143. And it is no wonder, since they had not a clear and distinct knowledge of the complete person of the Messiah, nor is it evident, that they believed that he should be the true and eternal God.

Objection. But is it not a vain attempt, to pretend to prove the doctrine of the Trinity from the jewish rabbies, when it is evident in itself, and generally granted by learned men, that the ancient Jews had no distinct notion of this doctrine, nor did they generally believe the deity of their Messiah, according to your own confession?

Answer. I am not proving the sacred doctrine of the Trinity from any of their writings. My present chief business is only to shew, that by various intimations and notices which they derived from the Old Testament, they are frequently led to speak of the word of God, or *memra*, as a power of the divine nature; that they also make *memra* to signify a glorious archangel; and though the Jews themselves do not expressly join these two, to make one complex person, yet they attribute so many of the same things to both, that gives a great deal of countenance to the doctrine of the New Testament, which seems to have joined or united these two *memra's* in the one person of the Messiah, that is, our blessed Saviour. But of this more hereafter.

I grant, all the later Jews have an aversion to the doctrine of the Trinity and the deity of Christ, and deny Jesus of Nazareth to be the Messiah: And therefore they apply a multitude of Scriptures to David, Solomon, Hezekiah, Isaiah, &c. which their ancient rabbies applied to the Messiah, for fear lest they should agree to Jesus. But Dr. Owen, in his learned *Exercitations on the Epistle to the Hebrews*, especially 8, 9,

10, 11, shews, that the targums abound in applying the scripture prophecies to the Messiah.

Before I make any more inferences, let us consult the writings of Philo the Jew; he lived in Alexandria in Egypt, and was one of the ambassadors of the Jews to the emperor of Rome, a little after the death of our Saviour. He was a great writer, and a very learned man: His language is greek, and he is supposed to write in our Saviour's life-time; in many of his books he speaks of the *logos*, or *the word of God*, and uses it in most of those senses in which the targums use it.

Now though I have neither health nor leisure enough to throw away much of them in perusing such ancient jewish folios, and allegorical writers,* yet I have turned over three or four hundred pages of this author, and read all I could meet with there concerning the *logos*, and have also searched out many other of the citations of Dr. Allix, in his *Judgment of the ancient Jewish Church*, and Mr. Nye, in his *Four Letters against Dr. Allix*, and must declare upon the whole, that their citations for the most part are just, though in some places Mr. Nye keeps nearer to the words and sense of the original author.

The senses in which Philo may be supposed to use the word *logos*, are these:

I. Perhaps he may mean God himself by the *logos*, when, in his *Treatise of the Cherubim*, he says, "God has two supreme powers, *viz.* goodness and strength, or dominion, and between these is the *logos* which unites, or reconciles them both." Compare this with his *Discourse on the Sacrifices of Cain and Abel*, where he says, "God accompanied with his two supreme powers, *viz.* dominion and goodness, he himself being in the midst of them." What he calls the *logos* in one place, he calls God himself in the other. But whether he may not intend the divine mind, reason, or wisdom, I will not determine.

I confess he does not so manifestly use the name *logos* to signify God himself, as the targums do; though in many places, when God, or Jehovah, is said to visit the patriarchs, and transact affairs with them, Philo ascribes it to the *logos*, or word of God. But it must be acknowledged that he does with much more frequency and plainness use the term *logos* in the following senses:

II. Philo uses the word *logos* often for a particular divine power or property, which he frequently represents in a personal manner, and ascribes to it the characters that belong to a person, as the Jews are wont to do in a figurative way. As he speaks of those two divine powers, δυνάμεις, *viz.* goodness and dominion, so he sometimes speaks of the *logos*, that is, the word, or wisdom, or reason, as of another power, the director and governor of both these. He calls all these powers "uncreated, eternal, infinite, immense, and incomprehensible: By one of these powers all things were created; by another all things are governed." But he makes the *logos* to be employed both in creation and government, though eminently in creation.

In his treatise, *De Mundi Opificio*, he says, "the vast intelligible world, or the idea according to which God framed the visible world, can have no place but in the θεῖος λόγος, or *divine word*, for the other powers of God do not afford it a proper place." And a little

* Though Philo abounds in unreasonable allegories, and turns the literal history of the Bible into an allegorical sense, yet this very allegorical sense is a sufficient indication what his opinions were, even though his application of them to particular Scriptures be never so ridiculous: And consequently this is sufficient to answer all the purposes for which I cite him.

after he saith, "this intelligible idea, in plain words, is nothing else than the λόγος τῦ Θεῦ, the word of God, or the reason of God creating the world." He speaks of God's creation of the world by the *logos*, as an instrument, ὄργανον, in several places. And in his *Plantation of Noah*, he tells us, that "man's rational soul is the image of the invisible God, whose character, or express image, is eternal reason, or his everlasting word," ἣ χαρακτὴρ ἐστιν ὁ ἀΐδιος λόγος, though whether these two last citations refer rather to the angelic *logos*, may admit some doubt.

He supposes this *logos* of God to be the same as *sophia*, or wisdom, which in his allegorical way he makes the "daughter of God, and the mother of all things, by which the world was brought forth. This is that wisdom which was with God before the world." See *Dr. Allix*, page 147, and *Mr. Nye against Dr. Allix*, pages 71, 77.

Now that by this *logos*, the divine reason, or wisdom, Philo does not mean a real distinct person, in the literal sense of the word person, is evident; because he says, "before the world was made, God was μόνος, *alone;* ἕν, *one being;* and οὐκ ἐκ πολλῶν συνέστώς, *not consisting of more:*" And he often speaks of the person of God, as one; though he represents several powers in him. See *Nye*, page 69.

We may observe that Philo speaks of wisdom in the feminine, and once he gives this reason for it, *viz.* to "preserve to God the character of a Father." So Dr. Allix, page 271. But Mr. Nye does not remember that this divine essential wisdom is ever called the Son of God; and he cites *Origen contra Celsum*, Book II. page 79, saying, "I have often disputed with the jewish rabbies: They would none of them acknowledge that the λόγος, that is, the divine reason, word, or wisdom, is the Son of God," page 51. Whence we may infer, that this name *Son*, seems rather to be appropriated to the *logos*, considered as the great archangel; even as all the angels are in Scripture called the sons of God. Dr. Allix, indeed, says, page 122, "that Philo asserts the word of God to be the eternal Son of God," and quotes his book, *De Confusione Linguarum*. Now I have turned over that book, and have not found this express appellation: But what expressions of that kind I have met with there, and in other of his treatises, shall be cited under the following heads.

III. The term *logos* is used frequently by Philo for a glorious angel, vastly superior to all other angels, whom he calls the most honourable *logos*, the archangel, prince of angels and stars; and as the Jews and Scriptures call all angels *sons of God;* so this *logos*, this archangel, according to Philo, is the first-born of all his sons.

In his *Treatise of the Confusion of Tongues*, he persuades men "to endeavour to be adorned like the first-born word of God, the most ancient angel, the archangel who has many names, who is called *the beginning*, ἀρχὴ, *the name of God; the Word of God; the man after God's image;* and *the seer of Israel*. And he adds, "Wherefore I commended those who had said that we are all sons of one man, ἑνὸς ἀνθρώπου; for though we are not worthy to be called the children of God, yet we are the children of his most holy Word, his ἀϊδιὸ, everlasting image; for the most ancient word is the image of God." In another place, a little before this, where he is persuading mankind to peace, he says, "How comes it to pass, that ye do not hate war, since ye profess to have the same Father, not mortal but immortal, even ἀνθρωπον θεῦ ὃς τυ ἀϊδίυ λόγος ὤν, a man of God, who being the word of the Eternal, must himself also be incorruptible."

Again, "from a companion of Moses, that is Zachary, a fellow-prophet, we have

heard this saying, Behold a man whose name is THE EAST,* Ἀνατολὴ, This is a new sort of appellation, if we understand it of a man who consists of a body and a soul; but if it be understood of that incorporeal man †, who differs not from the divine image, you will confess that it is a most happy name for him: For the Father of beings caused this his most ancient Son to arise, ἀνέτειλε, whom otherwise he calls his *first-born;* who being born did immediately imitate his Father's ways: For seeing his archetypal exemplars, he did form copies exactly like them." This Philo speaks when he cites *Zech.* vi. 12, "Behold the man, whose name is Ἀνατολὴ, *the East*, or THE BRANCH;" *De Confusione Linguarum.* And these words bear a very near affinity to the words of our Saviour himself, John v. 19, *The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: For what things soever he doeth, these also doth the Son likewise.*

In his book *De Migratione Abrahami*, he says, that "God, who is the mind of the universe, ὁ νοῦς τῶν ὅλων, has his *logos* for his house.—What house can he have but his word, who is elder than things created, which the pilot of the universe useth as a rudder, to steer or direct all things?" This seems to refer to an angel who is his only begotten Son, prior to all mere creatures, and not ranked among mere created beings, one in whom God inhabits, and by whom he transacts his affairs of government.

Again, saith Philo, *De Agricultura*, "God governs this universe as a shepherd doth his flock; over-ruling and managing the earth, water, air, fire, the heavens, sun, moon, things mortal and spiritual, having set over them his own righteous *logos*, who is his first-born Son; who takes upon himself the care of this sacred flock, as vicegerent of this great king: Therefore it is said, Exod. xxiii. 20, *Behold, I send my angel before thee, to keep thee in the way.*

Again, in another place, "nothing mortal can be formed, that is immediately, after the image of the supreme God and Father of all things; but only after the image of the second god, who is the *logos* of God: For the reasonable part of the soul of man is the express image of the *logos* of God." Though whether Philo meant the divine essential power, called *logos*, or the great archangel in this place, perhaps, may be questioned; but it is most agreeable to the last. See more in Mr. Fleming's *Christology*, Vol. I. page 248, &c. and Mr. Nye's *Answer to Dr. Allix*, page 75.

Philo asserts the great dignity of the angel that appeared to the patriarchs, and calls him eminently *the Word.* It was the "Word appeared to Adam; he appeared also to Jacob and Moses, though in the books of Moses he is called an angel. It was the Word that appeared to Abraham, as an angel, and that called to him not to hurt his son, when he was about to sacrifice him. It was the Word appeared to Hagar, and to Jacob, and delivered him out of all his troubles. It was the Word directed him how to manage Laban's flock, and advised him to return to the land of his kindred, that appeared to him in the form of an angel, and wrestled with him, and changed his name to Israel. It was the Word who led Israel through the wilderness. He was the angel in whom God placed his name; the prince of the angels who was in the cloud, and is called the 'divine vision of fire.' He appeared to Moses and the elders of Israel, on mount Sinai. He appeared to Balaam like an angel; and it was the Word, who is

* THE BRANCH, *Zech.* vi. 12, is rendered ἀνατολὴ, by the LXX. which signifies also *the east.*

† Now that Philo seems to mean a man here, or a human soul, may be proved; because he speaks of him in direct opposition to a worse sort of man, whom he also calls ἀνατολὴ, or *the east*, because he lived in the east: This was Balak, who, saith Philo, "hath a name like the former, but it is very different in reality."

the Son of God, that conducted Israel through the wilderness." See Dr. Allix's *Judgment of the Jewish Church*, Chap. XII. XIII.

"This Word is not unbegotten, ἀγέννητος, like God, and yet not begotten or made, γεννητὸς, like his creatures. He is a divine angel, θεῖος ἄγγελος, and a minister of the gifts of God." *Quod Deus sit immutabilis.* And it is evident, that Philo makes a great difference between the true God, and this *logos*, or Word: He abounds with instances of this kind, especially in his first book, *De Somniis.* And when he makes God to appear to the patriarchs in form of an angel, he adds, "they understand the image of God, the angel, his word, as though it were himself," because a little after he calls him, "the mighty Word, who is the deputy of God."

It may be also most properly applicable to this glorious archangel, what Philo saith of the Word, in his *Allegories of the Law*, Book I. where he cites Jacob saying, "The God who hath fed me all my life, and the angel who redeemed me from all evil:" On which he remarks, that "Jacob speaks very properly of God himself as his feeder; and the angel, which is his Word, as a healer of diseases, or deliverer from evils:" And he gives this reason for it, "feeding and nourishing are something in nature more considerable than deliverance," and therefore he ascribes the chief benefit to God, and the lower benefit to the angel. I mention not this, as approving the justness of Philo's criticism, but to shew what was Philo's opinion of this glorious angel, eminently called *the logos.*

It must be granted, that Philo calls common angels also λόγοι, *logoi*, or *words;* but it is abundantly manifest to any man who reads Philo, and Mr. Nye himself acknowledges, there is a great distinction that Philo makes between that first archangel, who is so far superior to all the rest, as to be formed before them all, and to be their Ruler or Director; and to be eminently called *the logos*, above all others.

IV. That the *logos* is esteemed by Philo the Son of God, is manifest from the citations already made: But we may add further, out of Dr. Allix, *Chap.* XVII. that when the question is put, Prov. xxx. 4, *What is his name? And what is his Son's name?* it implies, that God has a Son. And *Psalm* ii. 7, where God declares, *Thou art my Son*, it determines this character to belong to the Messiah. And Philo accordingly declares that the *logos* is the most ancient Son of God, and his first-born before the angels. And in a citation which Eusebius has out of Philo, he makes him "the eternal Word of the eternal God, begotten by the Father:" Though it may, perhaps, be doubted, whether Eusebius has cited the very words of Philo. And if Philo did use the words ἀΐδιος and αἰώνιος, and apply them to the sonship of the *logos*, it may be justly questioned whether either Philo or Eusebius, considering their character and sentiments, meant any more than πρὸ τῶν αἰώνων, that is, "Before the worlds were made, or before all ages;" unless we suppose both the Jew and the Christian to blend and confound the ideas of the divine eternal *logos*, or reason of God, with the first-born *logos*, or great archangel, which was too often done.

V. This *logos*, Philo supposes to be a Mediator between God and men; and though he does not distinctly call him *the Messiah*, yet he calls him *a man*, and attributes the office of Mediator between God and man to him. He calls him, in his first book, *De Somniis*, ὁ θεῖος λόγος, της ἀρεσκείας κεφαλὴ καὶ τέλος, "the divine word, the beginning and the end of the atonement." He supposes it was the *logos* which appeared to the Jews on mount Sinai, and gave them the law, as a sort of Mediator between God and them.

He affirms, that the *logos* was the true and eternal Priest, *Libro de Profugis:* "That he divided the sacrifice when he appeared to Abraham, and that he was the priest of God: That the Word is a mediator between God and man; that he makes atonement with God." And many other things which plainly belong to the Messiah, our great High-Priest, in Scripture, does Philo apply to the *logos*. See *Dr. Allix*, Chapter XX.

But for this purpose I need cite no other passage than what I met with lately in Philo's treatise, *Quis Rerum divinarum Hæres*. He saith, "The Father of all things has bestowed this most admirable gift upon this archangel, that he should stand as a mediator, μεθόριος, that is, *one on the borders of both*, to distinguish between the creature and the Creator. He therefore is an intercessor, ἱκέτης, with him that is immortal in behalf of perishing mortals. And, on the other hand, he acts the part of an ambassador, from the ruler to his subjects. And this gift he doth so willingly accept, that he glories in it, saying, 'And I have stood between God and you,' (see *Deut.* xviii. 15, 16, 17, 18, 19) being one who am neither unbegotten as God, nor made as mortals; but being something middle between these, ὁμηρεύων, acting the part of an hostage with both: With the Creator as a pledge, in faith of this, that he may not ever be provoked to destroy or desert the world, so as to suffer it to run from order into confusion: And with creatures to give them this certain hope, that God being reconciled, will never cease to take care of his own workmanship. For I proclaim peace to the creature, from that God who removes war, and introduceth and preserveth peace for ever." I find Mr. Fleming has transcribed this passage at large, in his *Christology;* and Mr. Nye has cited the most remarkable part of this passage also in his *Four Letters*.

From all these citations out of the Targums and Philo's works, it seems plain, that the term *logos* is sometimes attributed to that which is increated, infinite, supreme of all, of the essence of God, and incommunicably divine: It is at other times used to signify an inferior nature, an angel, something that is derived, begotten, dependent, and much below the dignity of godhead. It must be acknowledged, that these ancient Jews mingle some confusion with their writings, and do not keep their supreme and inferior ideas so distinct as one would wish. And this is not strange, because they wanted that clear revelation of the union of God and a creature in one Jesus Christ, one complex principle of action, which we Christians enjoy by the gospel.

And yet even the most part of christian writers seem to have unhappily fallen into the same confusions, when they treat of these transactions of the Word, before the incarnation: And though they have framed different schemes for the reconciliation of these difficulties, it has been hitherto without any great success. And the reason, perhaps, is this, because each of them generally attribute all that is said of the *memra*, or *logos*, merely to his divine and supreme nature, or they apply it all merely to his created, or inferior nature; or else they drop one of these natures entirely; and thus miss the mark, for want of supposing such an union between a divine and created nature, before the incarnation of Christ: Whereas this union discovers a proper complex subject for these different attributions.

The christian writers who cite those passages out of the Targums and Philo the Jew, interpret them according to their own scheme of divinity, and their particular sentiments of the person of Christ; as appears if we consider their writings.

Sandius is generally known to be a follower, or imitator, of the arian scheme, and

he applies as many of these glorious expressions as he can, to the great archangel, that first-born spirit, which the arians suppose to be the divinest nature of Christ, and while he makes this to serve for a human spirit to the Messiah, he doth not allow any superior or divine nature to belong to him. He sums up his collections out of Philo, which he had elsewhere made, in these words, "The *logos* is a second god, next to the first; and governs the world by command of the first God: That God himself and his Word are two things: That the supreme God is unbegotten and invisible, and the God of the *Logos;* but the *Logos* is begotten and visible, the minister of God, and the intercessor with God for men, the ambassador of God to men, and a middle being, or medium, between God and creatures." *Sandii Nucleus Historiæ Ecclesiasticæ*, page 108. See many other citations of his out of Philo, in his *Interpretationes Paradoxæ, &c.*

Mr. Nye, on the other hand, who hath been accused as approaching the sabellian principles, seems, in his *Letters against Dr. Allix*, to drop this glorious spirit, or archangel, which is called the *logos*, as a mere jewish notion; and does not make it enter into the composition of the person of Christ; but supposes the sublimer characters of the *logos* to belong to the essential wisdom of God, or the Word, which was personally united to the man Jesus at his incarnation. See his *First Letter against Dr. Allix.*

Dr. Allix, in his *Judgment of the Jewish Church*, approaches nearer to the tritheistical hypothesis, and is charged with it by Mr. Nye, because he speaks of three creators, makers, and gods; a trinity of uncreated beings and spirits; see *Nye against Allix*, pages 5, 7, 8, 13, 14, 177, &c. Now on this hypothesis Dr. Allix, distinguishing the divine wisdom, or Word, from God the Father, as a real, proper, distinct person, sometimes he applies what these jewish authors say of the archangel, called the *logos*, to the eternal divine Word, or wisdom, that is, to the second person in the Deity; though this seems not to be agreeable to their sense, for these ancient Jews describe this angel as a superior sort of created or derivative being, an effect or production of the will and power of God, as the christian fathers speak, and though not coming perfectly into the rank of other creatures, yet not as being the true God, or properly divine. Mr. Nye justly reprehends Dr. Allix for this, that he hath heaped together indifferently all that Philo says of several *logoi*, and applied all to the eternal essential *Logos*, not being aware that this eternal essential *Logos* is very different from the great created *logos*, or archangel, who presides over the angels and stars. *Letter* II. page 80.

In short, all the moderns interpret these ancient jewish writings, as every party of men is ready to interpret the Scripture, to support their own hypothesis. But I cannot persuade myself that either Sandius, Dr. Allix, or Mr. Nye, in their sentiments, do sufficiently answer the expressions of these ancient authors: For each of them doth either join and affix divine characters to a dependent or created nature, or they apply inferior and creatural characters to a divine nature, or else they drop one or more of these senses of the word *logos*, and leave it out of the character of the Messiah. Whereas, if we would but give ourselves leave to suppose the Messiah, or the *Logos*, even in his pre-existent state as well as after his incarnation, to be a complex, or compounded person, and that the divine *Logos*, the eternal Word, assumed a superangelic or inferior nature, called also *logos*, into union with himself, before he

took flesh upon him, and even before the world was made, this would reconcile all these ideas which seem inconsistent, and scatter the darkness that hangs over these ancient writers, and even over the Scripture itself, if this opinion be not admitted.

The learned Mr. Robert Fleming* seems to come nearer to the sense of these ancients, and explains them more agreeably to Scripture, when he supposes the eternal essential *Logos* to be a person in the godhead, and to be united to the created *logos* or great archangel, which is the pre-existent soul of Christ; and thus the sublime and inferior expressions of the ancients concerning this complex being may be happily reconciled and explained.

SECTION IV.

THE APPLICATION OF THE JEWISH SENTIMENTS TO THE SCRIPTURAL ACCOUNT OF CHRIST.

Give me leave now to inquire, whether Scripture doth not lead us to this conception of things? Whether Scripture does not set the *Logos*, or Word of God, in all these lights and views? Or, whether the Scripture does not speak of Christ according to the five particular ideas whereby the ancient Jews interpret or explain their *logos?* Though for conveniency sake I shall not mention them just in the same order.

I. That Christ, who is called *the Logos* in Scripture, is the Messiah, admits of no doubt or controversy among Christians.

II. That Christ, or the *Logos*, is the Son of God, is also asserted so expressly in many texts, as to forbid all dispute about it: And he has obtained this name in Scripture, upon these accounts.†

1. On the account of his investiture with the office of the Messiah; for hereby he was appointed to be the great High-Priest and King of his people: And this title was more eminently his due at his resurrection, ascension, and exaltation in heaven, to be a priest upon a throne, where his kingdom and power to save were more illustriously displayed, according to these texts: Psalm ii. 6, 7, *I have set my King upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree, the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me*, that is, by intercession in heaven, *and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, &c. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish.* Psalm lxxxix. 27, *I will make him my first-born, higher than the kings of the earth.* Heb. v. 5, *Christ glorified not himself to be made a high-priest, but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to-day have I begotten thee.* Acts xiii. 33, "God hath fulfilled his promise in raising Jesus from the dead, as it is written in the second Psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee."

2. He is called *the Son of God* on the account of the extraordinary birth of his

* As Scotland has produced some great and illustrious instances of piety and devotion, some men of a heavenly mind, filled with the fire of divine love beyond their fellows, so this learned author, Mr. Robert Fleming is an instance of what might be expected from that nation also in respect of light and sacred knowledge, if they did but exert their genius with the same liberty of sentiment that he used, whose constant motto was, *Liberè sed modestè.*

† Some may wonder that I have omitted the eternal generation of his divine nature in this place. But I know no text that plainly calls Christ the Son, considered as pure God; and if revelation does not dictate the doctrine of a begotten god, reason does not at all require it. But I have given a larger account of this matter in another place.

body, which proceeded from the virgin Mary without a human father, by the immediate influence of God: *Luke* i. 35, the angel saith to Mary, *The power of the Highest shall overshadow thee, therefore that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.* This is most express language.

But is it evident by the foregoing citations, that the *logos* is not usually called *Son of God* by these ancient Jews, upon either of these two accounts, but rather on that which follows, which is the third idea of the term *logos*.

III. The *logos* is the first-born Son of God, as he is a glorious, angelic, or supra-angelic spirit, who was often called *an angel*, under the Old Testament, when he appeared to the patriarchs. May not this be the human soul of our blessed Saviour? May not this illustrious spirit, this great archangel, which is called eminently *the logos*, be the prince of angels, who was born before them all, and is the first-born of the creation? May not this be the only begotten Son of God in the high heaven, as Adam was here on earth, as having, perhaps, some peculiar mode or unknown manner of derivation from the Father, different from the rest of the creatures? For even these ancient Jews, though they acknowledge him to be, in the general sense, a derived being, and not God, yet they call him rather the first-born of God, as though creation were too low a term to express his original, and would set him too much on a level with other creatures which were so far inferior to him. And why may we not suppose the human soul of Christ to be derived from God, in some unknown transcendent manner, distinct from other creatures, even as his human body was, and thus to become the peculiar Son of God, both as to his body and soul?

One great reason that hath induced me to believe that the Scriptures suppose the soul of Christ to be this pre-existent being, this glorious archangel, is, because there are so many expressions of Scripture, both in the Old Testament and the New, which represent Christ, before his incarnation, under some characters which are inferior to godhead, some of which I have hinted briefly in the beginning of this Discourse.

Now, upon this supposition, that the soul of Christ is this most honourable *logos*, or chief angel, how properly is he called in the Old Testament "the angel of God's face, or presence," *Isaiah* lxiii. 9: "The angel of the covenant," *Mal.* iii. 1: "The angel, the Redeemer of Jacob," *Gen.* xlviii. 16: "The angel in whom the name of God was," *Exod.* xxiii. 20: And, "the angel who could say, *I am that I am, I am the God of Abraham*," Exod. iii. 2, 14, 15, &c. upon the account of his intimate and personal union to the divine nature?

It might be here inquired also, Whether the angel mentioned in *Eccles.* v. 6, be not the same glorious archangel, that is, Christ? The words are these, "Say not before the face of the angel, it was an error: Wherefore should God be angry at thy voice:" Solomon is here advising us against rash vows. And he supposes some eminent angel, "in whom is the name of God," as *Exod.* xxiii. 20, or who is called God, being present to hear the vow, especially in the house of God, as *verse* 1. It it certain, the Jews had a common notion of some extraordinary angel in whom God dwelt, and the Scripture often intimates it.

IV. The *logos*, or word, sometimes signifies the wisdom of the Father, or some special power, or divine sufficiency of the godhead, whereby all things were contrived and created, and which is represented sometimes in a personal manner by these jewish writers: Psalm xxxiii. 6, *By the word of the Lord were the heavens made.* 2 Peter iii. 5, 7,

By the word of God the heavens were of old, that is, were created; and "by the same word they are preserved, and reserved for the fire." And whether ῥῆμα, used on the same occasion, by which "the world was made, and is upheld," *Heb.* i. 3, and xi. 3, may not be the same with this divine λόγος, is matter of inquiry, and in my maturest thoughts, it is not improbable.

In this sense Christ is also the *logos*, or Word of God; for God created all things by that *logos*, who "was with God, who was God, who was made flesh, and dwelt among us," *John* i. 1, 14. "He created the worlds by this his Son," *Heb.* i. 2. He *created all things by Jesus Christ*, Ephes. iii. 9. He is that divine wisdom which was with God before the foundations of the world were laid, as Solomon describes in *Prov.* viii. 22—31.

And if we can suppose this wisdom, or word, assuming into union with itself the soul of the Messiah, or that great archangel, when he was first created or generated, and using his ministration in its ancient divine operations and transactions, then all those superior and inferior expressions which are used in *John* i. 1—14, and in *Col.* i. 15—19, and in *Heb.* i. 2—11, and in *Prov.* viii. 22—31, and in *John* v. 19, 20, 26, 27, &c. may be applied to Christ as a complex person. Then it may be said concerning this person, "he was brought forth before the hills, the Lord possessed him in the beginning of his way, before his works of old, he was set up from everlasting, that is, from the beginning, or ever the earth was," &c.

On this text, in Prov. viii. 22, *The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way*, it may be further observed, that the Septuagint renders the Hebrew word קנני ἔκτισε με, that is, *created me*, which the primitive christian writers often cite, but are at a great loss how to explain it. Sometimes they apply it to the Father's constituting Christ Lord of the creation; which does not seem to be the true meaning of it in this place. Sometimes they refer it to the production or generation of the *logos*, by the will and power of the Father; which is a superior sort of creation, and may be most properly applied to this angelic *logos*, or human soul of Christ, which was created or produced by the will of the Father, and assumed into union with, or possessed by the divine *logos* before all worlds, of which we shall say more hereafter.

These are only remarks by the way: But it is manifest, that *the word of God*, or *logos*, in Scripture, sometimes signifies an essential, co-eternal, divine power. And in that famous text, 1 John v. 7, *There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Spirit, and these three are one;* whether the *logos*, or *word*, signify this divine power, which is called the second person in the deity, or whether it signify Christ in his whole complete person as God-man, is hard to determine.

V. In *Heb.* iv. 12, the *word*, or *logos*, denotes God acting by his word; *logos* implies God himself, for a divine power is deity. And Christ is the *logos* in this sense also: For the evangelist John says, *the Word was God*, John i. 1; and St. Paul calls Christ *God manifest in the flesh*, 1 Tim. iii. 16; he is the *Lord* and the *God* of Thomas the apostle, John xx. 28; he is *God over all, blessed for ever*, Rom. ix. 5. The divine essential power, called the *logos*, is the true God, for every thing essential to God, is God.

Nor is it strange at all, that *logos* should signify God himself, since it signifies the wisdom or reason of God; for the same word *logos*, in its primary or most usual sense, denoting the reason of any spirit, is upon that account used sometimes to denote the Spirit itself. Thus the human mind, and angelic spirits, are called λόγοι among ancient

greek writers, particularly Philo and Origen; but Christ is called ὁ λόγος or *the Word*, emphatically, and *the divine Word*.

If therefore Christ be a divine power, called the *logos*, he is God himself.

Thus all these five applications of the terms *logos*, or *memra*, or *word*, as used by the ancient Jews, are happily reconciled in our blessed Saviour; and a great part of that confusion which seems to be in their expressions, is banished by this representation of things: Thus also there seems to be an illustrious light shed upon many dark passages of Scripture, and the inferior and superior characters of the Messiah, Christ, or *Logos*, are naturally and easily adjusted, by supposing his sacred person to be composed of a glorious created spirit, inhabited by the divine essential or personal wisdom, or word. Thus he was the eternal Creator, and also the first-born of all the creatures, and in some sense existed as God-man before his incarnation. And this is what I have endeavoured to evince by the light of Scripture, in a distinct treatise of *The Glory of Christ as God-man*, which may shortly see the light.*

In this view of things we have no need to make Christ to be the Son of God properly in his divine nature, or to attribute any character of derivation, generation, or dependence, to his pure godhead, which carries a seeming impropriety in it. His sonship, even under the Old Testament, as well as under the New, is better accounted for this way; and his angelic character, as the messenger of God in all ages, and the revealer of his will to the patriarchs, as well as to us, is preserved and explained, without sinking pure Godhead down to inferior characters, or attributing superior and divine characters, titles, and prerogatives, to an angelic or inferior nature.

The learned and pious Dr. Thomas Goodwin, that deep and happy inquirer into the sense of Scripture, gives numerous instances wherein the divine nature of Christ must be supposed by way of prolepis to be united to many of the expressions of Scripture concerning Christ. Those glorious texts, *John* i. 1—3. *Col.* i. 16, 17. *Heb.* i. 2, 3. *Phil.* ii. 6. *Prov.* viii. 22—31, are all interpreted by him in this light, in his *Second Book of the Knowledge of God the Father, and his Son Jesus Christ*, Vol. II. fol.

"It is Christ," says he, "considered as God-man, who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature, by whom, and for whom, all things were created in heaven or earth, visible or invisible, who is before all things, and by whom all things consist, who is the Son of God, whom he hath appointed the heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds, who is the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, who by himself purged away our sins, who was in the form of God, and thought it no robbery to be equal with God, who is the word by whom all things were made, and who was with God in the beginning, who was set up from everlasting, and brought up before the hills," &c. And that learned author contends, that these attributions cannot belong to the pure simple divine nature of Christ, without taking in the inferior nature which was designed to be united to him; and therefore, in the language of Scripture, it is mentioned in such a manner as though it were actually united.

There is very little difference between my opinion, and the sentiments of that great man, in the exposition of all these Scriptures, except only that he attributes to the human

* This treatise was published in 1746, and is the last in this Volume.

nature of Christ before its existence, and considered only in its designed and future union with the divine nature, those same scriptural properties, characters, and transactions, which I would rather ascribe to the human soul of Christ, supposing it actually existent, and considered always in a present, real, and personal union with his divine nature. Now, as he supposes those texts must necessarily be explained concerning Christ as God-man, so I suppose a literal interpretation of Scripture is to be preferred before a figurative and proleptical sense, where it will consist with all other points of reason and revelation; and therefore I am ready to persuade myself, that the supposition of the real existence of the glorious human soul of Christ, as a super-angelic being, in actual union with the divine eternal *logos*, before the creation, as it happily corresponds with the ancient jewish notions, so it will afford a better solution to many scriptural difficulties, will raise a nobler idea of the person of our blessed Lord, and add a lustre to the whole scheme of the gospel, as depending on his person, characters, and transactions.

There is one objection will arise here, *viz.* How can the human soul of Christ be called *an angel*, since it is said in Heb. ii. 16, *He took not on him the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham?*

Answer I. The words in the original are, ἀγγέλων ἐκ ἐπιλαμβάνεται, &c. "He does not lay hold on angels, but he lays hold on the seed of Abraham," that is, to bring them out of that bondage in which they were held in the foregoing verse. Then it follows, verse 17, *Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like his brethren;* that is, "It behoved him, who had a soul before, to take flesh and blood upon him now, since he came to lay hold on men, to rescue them from bondage."

As the Greek words themselves do not signify taking the nature of angels, or of Abraham, so neither will the context allow that translation, as some learned men have supposed, particularly Camero. For it would be hardly consistent language to say, "He took not on him the nature of angels, but took on him the nature of the seed of Abraham; for which reason it became him to be made like his brethren," that is, to take flesh and blood upon him. This would be proving *idem per idem*. Whereas the sense is very natural when we read it thus, "He does not lay hold on angels to rescue them, but he lays hold on the seed of Abraham, for their rescue from bondage. Wherefore it became him in all things to be made like his brethren;" that is, "It became him, who before was a spirit, now to be made flesh, since he came to redeem those who are partakers of the flesh."

Answer II. But suppose our English translation were exactly true, yet the human soul of Christ may be called an angel in its separate state, though it be really a human spirit, or of a species of spirits different from the angelic world; for since the vulgar hypothesis supposes the divine nature of Christ to be called an angel in the Old Testament, because of its appearances like an angel, and being employed as a messenger from the Father, much more may we suppose the human soul of Christ to be called an angel for the very same reasons; while at the same time it might have some peculiar distinguishing properties of a human spirit, which are unknown to us.

SECTION V.

THE SENTIMENTS OF THE PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANS CONCERNING THE "LOGOS," AND THEIR APPLICATION OF THIS NAME TO CHRIST.

THUS we have seen how the doctrine of Scripture may be enlightened by some acquaintance with the writings of the ancient Jews. Now, if we find also, that the primitive Christians have left us several traces and footsteps of the same notions, if they speak the same sort of language, and correspond with these sentiments, it will be an additional confirmation of the doctrine which I have proposed.

I shall confine myself, chiefly, in this inquiry, to the writings of the three first centuries, which all the world esteems to be of the chief importance, as being nearest to the days of the apostles. Yet even of these I shall cite but few at large in their own language, because I intend this discourse as a mere essay, or hint of thought to others, who may be much better qualified to pursue such a reconciling scheme, and not as a laborious proof and demonstration of my opinion.

I. That the primitive fathers, by *the logos*, intended the Messiah in his pre-existent state, is a truth so abundantly manifest, and agreed on all hands, that it would be superfluous to make citations on this head.

II. That *the logos* is also the Son of God, is as evident as the former: The writings of the fathers, through all the centuries, are full of it: But in what sense he is *a Son*, and when he began to be a Son, whether from all eternity, or some time before the creation, is a matter of difference and doubtful inquiry, which we shall examine by and by.

III. That the *logos*, or word, is a divine power, eternal, infinite, &c. analogous to mind, wisdom, or reason, is so apparent in their writings, as leaves little room for doubt; though it is also represented often in a personal manner by the Christian fathers, even as in the sacred and common jewish writings.

The primitive fathers frequently call our Saviour *the word*, or *reason*, *the wisdom*, *the light*, *the virtue*, and *the power*, Νῶς, or *the mind* and sometimes Θέλημα, or *the will* of God. Many of them argue for the eternity of the *logos* upon this principle, "that God was always λογικὸς, never ἄλογος, always rational, and never without his reason, his word or wisdom." Justin Martyr, Athenagoras, Theophilus of Antioch, Tatian, and several others, assert the *Logos* to be co-eternal with the Father, under the character of the *divine word* or *reason*, though not under the special character of *a Son*.

Theophilus, in his *Second Book to Autolycus*, calls him "the wisdom and power of the Highest," and "the word which was conceived in the heart of God, and by which he formed the world." This word was διαπαντὸς ἐνδιάθετος ἐν καρδίᾳ Θεοῦ, and presently he adds, τοῦτον εἶχε σύμβουλον ἑαυτῷ νοῦν καὶ φρόνησιν ὄντα, that is, "always conceived in the heart of God. This word he had for a counsellor, being his own mind and thought, or prudence."

Hippolytus, *Contra Noetum*, Capite X. asserts, that "God being alone was many, for he was οὔτε ἄλογος, οὔτε ἄσοφος, οὔτε ἀδύνατος, οὔτε ἀβέλευτος, neither irrational, nor unwise, nor impotent; or, neither without reason, or without wisdom, or without power, or without counsel." "Which words," saith the learned Dr. Waterland, "correspond to the several names of the Son and the Holy Spirit, and mean the same thing."

Tertullian, *Contra Praxeam*, Capite V. says, "God was alone, because there was

nothing eternal but himself; but even then he was not alone, for he had with him, *rationem suam, quam habebat in semetipso,* his reason, which was within himself." And again, *Contra Hermogenem, Habuit Deus sophiam suam; hæc illi consiliarius fuit.* "He had his wisdom with him; and this was his counsellor." He supposes reason to be eternal, and to be before the word. *Non sermonalis à principio, sed rationalis Deus etiam ante principium,* that is "God had not the word with him, or was not a speaker, from the beginning, but was rational even before the beginning:" See *Contra Praxeam,* Capite V. So that Tertullian chooses to translate *the eternal logos,* reason; supposing him to become the Word at or a little before the creation.

Clemens of Alexandria, *In Stromatum,* Libro VII. calls Christ, or *the Logos,* πατρικὴ τις ἐνέργεια, "a certain virtue, or energy of the Father." And Justin Martyr, in his *Dialogue with Trypho,* calls him "a rational power,"* which is also called "the glory of the Father."

Now it is evident concerning the *Logos,* or Christ, as he is the wisdom, mind, or reason, of the Father, that he must be truly and properly divine, necessarily existent, eternal, infinite, &c. as the Father; for he is of the very essence of godhead; an eternal divine power, which belongs to the nature of God; which was always with God from eternity; is for ever unchangeable, and inseparable from God: And in this sense he is consubstantial and co-essential with the Father.

Though it seems manifest, that the *logos* in this sense is a power of the divine mind, and is not another conscious mind, distinct from the Father; yet it was the custom of the ancient jewish writers, as well as of the primitive Christians, sometimes to represent this *logos,* this eternal reason, wisdom, or word, in a personal manner; and that not only because the Scripture favours this dialect, or manner of speaking; but because the eastern nations frequently represent human as well as divine powers, in a personal manner; and the early Christians learning their Christianity from the apostles, and other converted Jews, were initiated and trained up in the phraseology of the eastern and jewish writers.

It is granted, indeed, that we know not how great the distinction is between God the Father, and his eternal Word or wisdom: It is justly supposed to be great enough to lay a sufficient foundation for such a distinct personal representation as the scriptural language and style give us. This divine *logos* seems to be represented, both in Scripture and in the primitive writers, as much distinct from the Father as the same essence admits of, or as distinct as may be, without being another conscious mind. Now this seems to be something more than a mere attribute; and therefore I call the *logos* a divine power;† imitating herein both the ancient Jews and the primitive fathers, who call him frequently Σοφία, and Νους, and Δύναμις τοῦ Θεοῦ, and particularly Clemens Alexandrinus, who makes him πατρικὴ τις ἐνέργεια. But since God and his co-essential Word do not seem to have two distinct consciousnesses, or to be two conscious minds; this eternal *logos* can hardly be called a *person,* in the common and literal sense of the term,

* Perhaps, by δύναμις λογικὴ in this place, Justin Martyr may mean some supra-angelic spirit; but I cannot certainly learn from the context, what his idea was.

† In what sense the *logos,* or divine Word, differs from an attribute; how it appears to be something analogous to a divine power; and how it is taken sometimes to signify the divine nature itself, exerting a particular power; the Discourse on *The Distinction of Persons in the Trinity* accounts for it. See *Dissertation* VII.

as a distinct man or angel, but only in figurative and metaphorical language, as some zealous trinitarians have expressed it.

Let it be noted here also, that most of the ancient fathers which have been now cited, do not suppose this eternal *logos* to be an eternal Son; but that he became a Son by a certain generation, prolation, or filiation, which some of them call creation, some time before the world was created.

Some of the ancients, indeed, seem to apply the word *Son* to this eternal *logos:* And some of them have explained their meaning, that the *logos* was ἐνδιάθετος, ἐν καρδίᾳ, ἐν σπλάγχνοις, that is, conceived in the heart, in the bowels of the Father; that he was potentially in the Father from eternity, though not actually produced: Which was also the express sense of some in the Nicene times, and of the emperor Constantine, as Eusebius relates it, in his *Letter to the People of Cæsarea.*

Or there is another sense wherein the *logos*, or eternal divine wisdom, may be called *a Son* as well as *a person*, by a figure of speech: For in the ancient eastern and scriptural idioms, any thing that has either a logical or a physical sort of dependence, is sometimes called *son*, or *daughter*. So the eternal wisdom or reason, word or will, flowing from the essence of God, may, possibly, be called a *son*. So, among ourselves, knowledge, or intelligence, resulting from the essence of the human soul, may be called the offspring of the soul. And though I must confess, I doubt whether the Scripture ever calls Christ the Son of God in this sense, yet where ancient writers use this form of speech, they may be interpreted in the same manner as later and more modern authors, who use the same phraseology, explain themselves; if there be no better interpretation to be put on their words.

Austin has written much of the Trinity, and he often derives the Son from the Father, in such a manner as wisdom and knowledge are derived from the essence of the mind. The school-doctors, and the middle ages of the church, and some general councils, have spoken the same sort of language. Calvin and his followers describe what sonship they attribute to the eternal word, or wisdom, in this manner: And Mr. Baxter, who differs from Calvin in other things, agrees with him in this. This has been a frequent representation of the sonship of the divine Word, among the most orthodox writers. It is in this manner the learned and ingenious Dr. Wallis accounts for the sonship of the divine nature of Christ in his *Letters on the Trinity*, and many others of the modern and school trinitarian authors do the same.

Upon the whole it is plain, that the ancients generally, if not universally, suppose the *logos* to be a co-eternal power, belonging to God or the Father; though the most primitive writers do not generally express his proper distinct personality and sonship, until at, or some time before, the creation of the world. They suppose that there was then a generation, or a voluntary divine action put forth, whereby the *logos* existed in a new state, and became the Son of God; and that it is in this sense that he is called in Scripture, *the beginning of the creation of God*, and *the first-born of every creature*, Rev. iii. 14. Col. i. 15. "And it was at this time, according to some of the fathers, that the divine *logos*, or eternal wisdom, began to have a personality, or, at least, a more distinct personality than it had before." Baxter's *Methodus Theologiæ*, page 96, line the last.

IV. I proceed now to shew that these ancient primitive fathers believed the *logos* to be true God: And there is no need to labour in the proof of this; for since they

describe him as a divine power eternally and essentially belonging to the godhead, it follows that they must attribute proper deity to him, for every thing essential to deity is true God. What Mr. Baxter says in his *Methodus Theologiæ de Trinitate*, seems to demand the assent of intelligent readers, *Christum esse Dei*, λόγον, *seu sapientiam, in ecclesiâ uno quasi ore pronunciatum esse, seculorum omnium testimonia probant.* "The testimonies of all ages of the church pronounce, as it were with one mouth, that Christ is the *logos*, the word or wisdom of God."

Let it be seriously considered, what a multitude of Scriptures in the Old Testament, in which the one supreme God is plainly spoken of, are applied to Christ, or the *logos*, by the primitive fathers: As Gen. iii. 8, 9, *They heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden, and the Lord God called unto Adam.* Gen. xix. 24, *The* LORD, [or Jehovah] *rained upon Sodom, brimstone and fire from the Lord.* Gen. xvii. 1, 2, *The Lord appeared to Abram, and said, I am the Almighty God.* Gen. xxviii. 13, *The Lord stood above it*, that is, Jacob's ladder, *and said, I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac, &c.* And many other texts there are, wherein the names, characters, and transactions of Jehovah, the Lord and God of Israel, are attributed by the fathers to the *logos*, or Christ. While I have been reading in Justin Martyr's *Dialogue with Trypho the Jew*, how he directly ascribes to Christ those sacred names of *the Lord of hosts, the King of glory, God the Saviour, God the Lord, our God and our King*, in the 24th and 46th *Psalms*, and other illustrious divine titles in the 45th, 63d, 98th *Psalms*, and elsewhere; I have been ready to wonder how any writers could fairly deny true and eternal godhead to be attributed to Christ, by any of the primitive fathers.

Besides all this, when I consider the characters of supreme deity and of perfect unity with the Father, even in the same substance, which are ascribed to the *logos*, or to Christ, by the primitive writers, I think there is evident proof, that they supposed true godhead to belong to him. Their language represents him as an essential power of God himself. Origen says, "Let him that dares to say, there was a time when the Son was not, consider that he also says there was a time when wisdom was not, and when light was not." And there are others of the ancients that argue just in the same manner, *viz.* "that God could never be ἄλογος, or ἄσοφος, that is, without his word, his reason, and wisdom." Origen further asserts, that the "omnipotence of the Father and the Son is one and the same; as the Son is one and the same Lord and God with the Father." He calls him "the divine Word, who is God by nature." Irenæus calls him, *Ipse Deus*, or *God himself;* not another God, but the same God with the Father. This author abounds in expressions which make the Father and Son the one God. *Libro* IV. *Capite* XI. *Qui igitur à prophetis adorabatur Deus vivus, hic est vivorum Deus, et verbum ejus qui locutus est Moysi, qui et Sadducæos redarguit, &c.* And at the end of the chapter he concludes, *Ipse igitur Christus cum Patre, vivorum est Deus.* "He who was adored by the prophets as the living God, is the God of the living, *Matt.* xxii. 32; and his Word who spake to Moses, and refuted the Sadducees. Therefore Christ, with the Father, is the God of the living." Again, he begins *Libro* III. *Capite* VI. in this manner, *viz.* "Neither the Lord, nor the Holy Spirit, nor the apostles, would have definitively and absolutely called him God, who was not God, nor any one unless he were the true God." Then he goes on to shew, how Christ is called God; Psalm xlv. 6, *Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever.*

Psalm l. 1, "The God of gods, the Lord hath spoken;" on which he comments thus, "What God is this of whom it is said, 'God shall come, even our God, and shall not keep silence?' This is the Son, who says openly, *I am found of them who seek me not*," &c.

If we consult the ancients, with one mouth they all declare, that God alone is to be worshipped; and yet they declare also for the worship of the Son, or the divine Word: And when I read these expressions, I cannot suffer myself to believe, that while they wrote those things, they could deny Christ to be the true God. It is evident to me, they believed his godhead.

But I forbid myself to proceed in this work: It seems to be a needless and useless thing, to prove that the fathers, in a multitude of their expressions, asserted the true deity of the *logos*, after those great and learned authors, Bishop Pearson, Bishop Bull, Dr. Waterland, and Dr. Knight, have done it so effectually, in their large and laboured writings.

V. The remaining sense in which the ancient jewish writers used the term *logos*, is that of a "glorious angel, or archangel, formed before the creation of the world, called the first-born Son of God; the man after the image of God; the one man who is the father of all others; the beginning; the name of God;" and "who was employed as a messenger to the ancient patriarchs, and an instrument, or medium, by which God transacted many other important affairs, with regard to this lower world." Now the great inquiry is, Whether the primitive christian fathers ever used the word *logos* in this sense?

Here I must acknowledge, that they speak with much confusion, and mingle the ideas of the increated or eternal *Logos* together with some inferior and creatural ideas, which they attribute also to the *logos*. This would make one think, that some of them might have some obscure notices, intimations, and conceptions of this angelic *logos*, as personally joined and made one with the divine eternal *Logos:* Though neither the primitive Christians, nor the ancient Jews, keep the ideas of these two beings distinct; for sometimes they seem to attribute different, and seemingly inconsistent properties and actions to one and the same single *logos*. But an inquiry into this matter is the business of the next Section.

SECTION VI.

AN INQUIRY WHETHER THE MOST PRIMITIVE CHRISTIAN FATHERS SPAKE OF THE "LOGOS" AS AN ANGEL, OR A GLORIOUS SPIRIT INFERIOR TO GOD?

THAT I may give some general idea of the language of the fathers on this subject, I will range their sentiments under these four heads:

I. They represent the *logos* as being produced by, or derived from God the Father, by his will and power. He is called by some of the ancients, *a birth*, γέννημα; *a production*, προβλημα; *a second God*, δευτερος θεος; and sometimes, θεος γενητος, *a made God;* and represented as being made God, θεοποιούμενος by communication, or participation of the godhead of the Father. They speak frequently of the "Son's subordination to the Father," as to his being; of his "proceeding, or leaping forth, or being produced from

the Father," by generation, being "the first-born of every creature." They speak of his "existence, and his godhead being derived from the Father, together with all his power and glory:" Of his "receiving all that he has from the Father:" Of his being "generated by the power, by the will, and even by the design and counsel of the Father."* Of his "becoming God by the generation of the Father, which generation proceeded from his will." And Tatian calls him "a heavenly Spirit, begotten by the Father; and the first-born work of the Spirit," πρωτότοκον ἔργον.

When they speak of God the Father, they greatly advance their style; they bear witness to his self-existent, unbegotten, and underived nature, and call him αὐτοθεὸς, that is, "God of himself;" which sort of expressions they utterly deny concerning the Son. When they explain that text, John xiv. 28, *My Father is greater than I*, the ancients generally confess it to belong to Christ in his pre-existent nature, before his incarnation: And because the Father is the principle and original of the Son, therefore they say, he is greater.

It is true, they sometimes make the nature of the Father and Son the same: But they had such a settled belief and universal maxim among them, that the Father had some pre-eminence and prerogative above the Son, that they express his priority and superiority to the Son, in various forms of speech. Bishop Bull affirms this in *Defensione Fidei Nicænæ*, Sectione IV. Capite II. *De Subordinatione Filii:* And *Cap.* I. he asserts, that "All the fathers, without fear, pronounced him *principium, causa et autor filii*, ἀρχὴ, αἰτία, *et* αἴτιον τοῦ εἶναι, the principle or spring, the cause, the author of the Son, the cause of his being;" as well as that the Father is said to be "the spring of his godhead and power." He is the fountain, the root, the head of the Son, and has the peculiar title of *the only true God.* And as the Father is the cause, so the Son is αἰτιατὸς, the thing, or person, caused. And Bishop Bull expressly grants, that in the sense of the fathers, and in his own opinion, "The Son received not only his person, but his nature and deity from the Father." See "*Defensionem Fidei Nicænæ*," Sectione IV. Capite I. § 7.

II. The *Logos* is not only represented by these writers as generated, and existing by the will and power of God, but a great part of the ante-nicene fathers, and some of the post-nicenes also represent the procession, prolation, production, or generation of the Son, as temporary, and at some time before this world was made; or in order to form, make, or to adorn this world.

It must be confessed, that the post-nicene writers speak more of the eternal generation than the primitive ancients had done, yet they make his ante-mundane produc-

* It is a frequent expression among the ancients, that "Christ was begotten by the will, or counsel, and power of the Father:" And I humbly conceive, that the ancients in these places speak of the temporal, voluntary, and ante-mundane generation of the Son, and not of his eternal existence. The common sense of these expressions, *by the will of God*, or *by the power of God*, in Scripture, doth not imply a necessity of nature, but arbitrary will. So St. Paul is often called *an apostle by the will of God:* And there are above thirty places in the New Testament, where *the will of God* carries the same idea. And throughout all the Bible, when things are said to exist, or come to pass by the power of God, I think it always implies the voluntary or arbitrary exercise of divine power. And the most early fathers use these phrases in the same sense.

Let it be observed also, that in the same primitive writers I have found the same phrase, *By the will of God*, used several times, and applied to the incarnation of Christ, or his mission into this world by the will of the Father; which is certainly his arbitrary will. I might add also, that Bishop Bull himself, speaking of the generation of Christ, θελήσει καὶ βουλῇ, by the will and counsel of the Father, declares, "*Frustra sudant theologi, ut hæc dicta concilient cum æterna filii generatione.*" *Breves Animadversiones in Gilbertum Clerk. Annotata ad paginam* 117.

tion from the Father to be a generation also, and suppose this to be voluntary as well as temporal.

Though all of them grant the co-eternal existence of the *logos*, as a divine power, as the reason or wisdom of God, and in this sense some of them say, the "Father was always a Father, and never was without the Son, considered as the internal word, wisdom, or reason of God, or considering God the Father as having the Son always potentially within him;" yet many of the most early writers make the generation and distinct sonship of the *Logos*, to be temporary, and voluntary, and ante-mundane, and speak not plainly of any other; as Justin, Athenagoras, Theophilus, and several more besides them. Some of the most ingenious and learned defenders of the eternal godhead of Christ, have constantly allowed the highest generation of the Son, spoken of by Justin, and several others of the fathers, to be temporal, and that, perhaps, even the nicene bishops meant the same, when they call the Son "light of light," &c.

Tertullian saith plainly, "Though God is a Father, yet he was not always a Father, for he could not be a Father before there was a Son, now there was a time when the Son was not." He speaks always of the generation of the Son as a voluntary thing, and brought about in time: He calls this the *perfecta nativitas sermonis*, though the *logos*, considered as reason, was in the heart of God from eternity. So Theophilus, *Libro* II. *ad Autolycum*, speaks of the Λόγος which was always ἐνδιάθετος ἐν καρδίᾳ θεῷ, but afterwards God generated and produced this Word, τοῦτον τὸν λόγον ἐγέννησε προφόρικον, πρωτότοκον πάσης κτίσεως. Clemens Alexandrinus, who is a zealous asserter of the deity of the *logos*, the divine word or wisdom, speaks of the Son of God as πρωτόκτιστος σοφία, "the first created wisdom:" And many of the fathers speak of σοφία, or *wisdom*, as created, when God sent her forth to make the world, and they imitate herein the words of the LXX. in *Prov.* viii. 22, where wisdom saith, "The Lord created me the beginning of his ways." Κύριος ἔκτισε με ἀρχὴν ὁδῶν αὐτοῦ εἰς ἔργα αὐτοῦ, or "he made me as his first way towards his other works," as some of them seem to explain it.

Not only the most ancient writers, but even some in the times of the nicene council had this notion of the eternal existence of the *logos* in God the Father, and the production of him as a distinct Son in time, or at least, not co-eternally. For Athanasius himself, speaking concerning Christ, or the Word, says, "He who had an existence before, was afterward begotten into a Son," Τὸν ὄντα πρότερον, ὕστερον γεννηθέντα εἰς υἱόν. And the emperor Constantine, in Eusebius's *Letter to the Church at Cæsarea*, says, that "with respect to his divine generation, he had a prior existence before all ages, forasmuch as before his actual generation he was potentially in the Father, after an unbegotten manner." And this we may suppose they spoke in direct opposition to the arian error, who denied Christ to be any thing before he was begotten or born, and which was one of the errors which was anathematised in the council.

Let it be noted also, that though the distinct generation of the Son is not supposed to be co-eternal with the existence of the *logos* in the heart of the Father, yet it is by some of the ancients described as before all worlds or ages, πρὸ πάντων αἰώνων, and that must be in some unknown moment of the divine eternity.

III. This *Logos*, or Son of God, is represented under various other characters, which seem to denote an inferiority to the supreme God over all, and would lead one to suppose they might have some idea of an angelic being. He is called frequently an

angel by the ancients, and yet they say, "It is impious to call the supreme God over all an angel." He is acknowledged to "receive all his power from the Father, and that he is subject to the Father;" that in all things he "ministers to the will of the Father, and acts by his authority:" He is sometimes said ὑπηρετεῖν καὶ ὑπουργεῖν, to "serve the Father, or to work under him;" that he is "not stronger than the Father, but inferior or weaker," so Origen, οὐκ ἰσχυρότερος ἀλλ' ὑποδεέστερος; that "the Father is stronger, more powerful, more sublime, than the Son, so Tertullian, "*Innatum nato fortius; infectum facto validius; quod, ut, esset, nullius, eguit autoris, multo sublimius erit eo, quod, ut esset, aliquem habuit autorem.*" *Contra Hermogenem*, Capite XVIII. That "the Son is the second God, or the next power after the first God;" that he "pays due honour to the Father by calling him *The only true God*, John xvii. 3, owning the Father to be greater than he, *John* xiv. 28;" and all this with regard to his pre-existent nature before his incarnation.

The learned Bishop Bull, that excellent defender of the deity of Christ, in his *Defence of the Nicene Faith*, Section IV. Chapter III. acknowledges that "almost all the catholics before the days of Arius seem not to have known the invisible and immense nature of the Son of God, and they spake sometimes of him as though, even according to his divine nature, he were finite, visible, included in a certain place, and circumscribed in certain limits, while they at the same time assert and prove the Father to be immense, to fill all places, and to be included in none." Thence they infer, that "it is not the Father that appeared as God and Jehovah to the patriarchs, but the Son." For this he cites Justin Martyr, Tertullian, Novatian, and mentions also Theophilus, Irenæus, Origen, and six other bishops, as speaking the same sort of language.* I confess, Bishop Bull attempts a solution of this difficulty, both in that treatise, and in his remarks on Gilbert Clerk, and excuses the fathers, by "assigning invisibility to the real nature of the Son, but visibility to his economical character; it being condescent and agreeable that the Son should exhibit sensible tokens of his presence in certain places rather than the Father; because he had undertaken, even from the fall of man, to be a Mediator, and thus gave some presignifications of his incarnate state, being sent by the Father to appear amongst men." But the various manners of solving these difficulties shall be considered more particularly in the following Section; I insert this account of the writings of the ancients in this place, only as an intimation, that it is possible the ancients might have some confused idea of an inferior nature belonging to the Son before his incarnation.

IV. Another circumstance that would lead one to think, that some of the primitive ancients might have some intimations of a *logos* inferior to God, is, that they assert the very *Logos* himself to be made passible, and to suffer upon the cross; and that in a real and proper manner the *Logos*, or Word, was sensible of the sorrows which Christ endured for our sakes. Now we cannot suppose that they ever imagined that *Logos*, which was the eternal Word, or wisdom of God, to become passible, or to suffer pain or sorrow, any otherwise than in a mere relative manner, that is, as it was united to that soul and body which did suffer; for every thing of godhead is for ever impassible. And for this reason, when they write against the Patripassians, they abominate the thought

* It is worthy our notice, that Philo the Jew, in his book *De Somniis*, speaks the same language too, asserting that the "true God cannot be seen, but when he appeared to men it was in the form of an angel, of his most ancient and sacred Word, who is his deputy."

of God the Father becoming passible. But there is a *logos* which they suppose to become passible, and actually to feel and suffer shame and sorrow: It seems to be the labour of their expression, and the very thing in view, to shew, that the Word itself was passible and suffered. Irenæus was engaged in his writings against those who suppose that Christ fled away and left Jesus only to suffer, because they imagined that the true Christ was always impassible, and therefore his business was to shew, that the Word, the Son of God, became passible and suffered. See *Libro* III. *Capite* XVII. XVIII. and several other places. And Justin Martyr, in his *Dialogue with Trypho*, speaks of the Son of God being ἀληθῶς ἐν παθέσιν, really in sufferings for us; and λόγον παθόντα, "the Word suffering."* Thence I infer they might have some notion of a *logos* inferior to godhead.

These are the four particulars whereby I proposed to inquire, whether the primitive fathers of the christian church might be supposed to have any notion of an angelic *logos*, who is the Son of God, and yet inferior to the divine *logos*, or the eternal word, or wisdom, of the Father?

I have now finished my account of the *logos*, as exhibited in the ancient christian writers. I dare not pronounce them all of one mind in the things I have mentioned, nor that the same authors are always steady in asserting the same things, either in a consistence with themselves, or with one another: But I think in the main, these opinions which I have recited in these two last Sections concerning the *logos*, seem to be the more general sense of the primitive fathers, before the controversy of Arius arose, or the council of Nice was called: And it is known also, that some of the ancients, both at that time and afterward, express themselves almost in the same manner.

SECTION VII.

AN HUMBLE ATTEMPT TO RECONCILE THE DIFFICULTIES ARISING FROM THE VARIOUS EXPRESSIONS OF THE PRIMITIVE FATHERS.

WHOSOEVER reads all this variety of language concerning the *logos*, in these two last sections, where he is represented in the sublime characters of true and eternal godhead, and in the inferior characters of a dependent being, must readily confess that there is some difficulty in reconciling them.

From these different expressions of the primitive fathers arises the controversy in the church in later ages, concerning their sentiments of the godhead of Christ.

The arians, and all the rest who imitate their opinions, finding such a multitude of phrases and forms of speech in these primitive writers, wherein the *logos* is sunk below the dignity of godhead, they are tempted utterly to deny the true and proper deity of the *logos*. And either they interpret the most sublime and divine characters given to the *logos* in a rhetorical way, and reduce them to an inferior sense, by a hard and unreasonable strain of the words, or else they drop the sub-

* It is granted, that some of the ancients might perhaps believe a certain animal soul in Christ, considered as a man, which was the immediate subject of the sensations of wounding, scourging, nailing, &c. for their philosophy did hardly suppose the rational soul in man to be capable of these sensations. But it seems to be their general apprehension that the *Logos* or Word itself did really and truly sustain, if not sensible pain, yet sorrows and afflictions, in opposition to those who asserted him to suffer only putative, that is, relatively, or by construction.

limest expressions, as not belonging to Christ, or as inconsistent with the inferior characters given him; and then applying the inferior expressions only to him, they claim these ancients entirely on their side, though I think without just reason.

The athanasians, together with the scholastic trinitarians, and all their followers, reading the several glorious, eternal, and divine characters, ascribed to the *logos*, plainly find, that the ancients believed him to have true and proper godhead; and I think they prove it with sufficient brightness and evidence. But they are sometimes hard put to it to find out methods of accounting how all the inferior and creatural characters may be given to the self-same *logos*.

Were there not such a number of expressions in these ancient writers, which ascribe so different and seemingly inconsistent characters, *viz.* both the properties of God and a creature to the *logos*, we can hardly suppose that modern writers of such sense and sagacity, such probity and great learning, could run into so different extremes, could maintain such warm contentions to defend their own opinions, which are so widely distant, and that each should allege and believe the ancient fathers to be on their side. There seems to be so much darkness and perplexity amongst the fathers in this matter, as constrained Bishop Bull, that great and sincere defender of the deity of Christ, to call some of their expressions *parum cautæ locutiones, duræ, et incommodæ, &c.* He makes an honest and ingenuous complaint on this occasion, "*ad mira hæc patrum dicta quis non planè obstupescat? Quo σοφῷ φαρμάκῳ istius modi ipsorum dicta sanari possunt?*" *Defensione Fidei Nicænæ, Sectione* IV. *Capite* III. § 4. And in the beginning of this chapter he mentions a particular set of expressions concerning the visibility and locality of the Son, and the invisibility and unconfinableness of the Father, which run through almost all the monuments of the primitive writers, and which seem to contradict the deity of the Son, and this is, says he, *nodus vindice dignissimus, fateor me ad istum lapidem olim offendisse, &c.* The sense, in English, is this: "These are hard sayings, incautious expressions, and inconvenient speeches. Who is there would not stand amazed at such strange expressions of the fathers? What wise and happy method will reconcile them? What medicine will make them sound? This is a difficulty worthy of a solution; I confess, I was once ready to stumble at this stone," &c. So hard is it for an honest and good man not to acknowledge the perplexity, darkness, and seeming inconsistency of those venerable writers on this subject! And the reverend Dr. Waterland, with the same ingenuity, now and then confesses the difficulty of reconciling some of their expressions, and gives up a few of them, as improprieties or mistakes.

I might take notice here also, that there are some writers of name and worth among the athanasians, that speak with more freedom, and plainly declare, that several of the ancients, by their frequent ascriptions of creatural ideas to the *logos*, laid a foundation for arianism in the following ages, and therefore they will not abide by their sentiments, nor pretend to vindicate or excuse their expressions, because they cannot be all applied to the same divine nature of Christ.

But let us consider more particularly, how the learned authors among the athanasians, who are most favourable to the ancients, attempt to remove this stumbling-block. So far as I can gather light from their several works, thay seem to depend upon these following principles of solution:

I. That the temporal and voluntary generation of the *logos*, which is the only

generation many of the ante-nicene fathers speak of, is not properly a generation, but a mere manifestation of him, when God created the world by this *Logos*, or Word; and that he was, indeed, eternally and properly a distinct person from God the Father, and that he was the Son of God from all eternity, though he was not discovered as such until the creation. All these words, of generation, prolation, production, &c. therefore must mean nothing but manifestation. They make his eternal existence to arise from eternal generation, which those ancients do not mention, and they make his procession to create the world to be no real generation, which is the only generation those ancients speak of.

And they add further, that where the *logos* is said to be "begotton, or produced by the will, counsel, and power of God," when these words refer to this "temporary, ante-mundane generation, or manifestation," they may signify the free or arbitrary will of God the Father: But if ever these words do refer to the eternal and proper generation of the Son, that is, his emanation from the Father, then they must signify nothing but the acquiescence, or consent of the Father, to the natural and necessary emanation of this *logos*, or co-eternal Son.

II. Some of the athanasians suppose there may be some "real and natural subordination of an eternal Son to an eternal Father, though the divine nature be equal in them both," and that is, by supposing the Father only to be self-existent and independent, and by referring the Son's existence, and his godhead and power to the Father, as the spring and fountain of it, from which it is derived by way of natural and necessary emanation; and they think that this will account for all those inferior sort of expressions which are used concerning the derivation of the *logos* from God the Father, and the Father being greater than the Son.

III. They add in the next place, that the distinctions of priority and posteriority of order between the Father and the Son, even in the divine nature, will solve many of the expressions of the fathers, without a real subordination of nature.

IV. Another principle of accommodation is this: That the Son, though equal to the Father in nature or essence, yet is economically subordinate; that is, it is appointed in the dispensations of God toward his creatures, that the Son should act an obedient and subjective part by the relation in which he stands, and the office which he sustains with regard to God and creatures: And that all this may be done by the divine condescension of the eternal *Logos*, and thus the inferior and creatural sort of expressions applied to the *Logos*, by the primitive fathers, must be construed economically.

V. They suppose, in the last place, that the eternity and necessity of the existence of the Son, are sufficient to secure his true and proper deity, even though it be really derived from the Father, and therefore cannot be self-existent. They suppose also, that the eternal, necessary, and inseparable union of the Father, Son, and Spirit, is sufficient to secure the unity of the godhead, though they be really three distinct intelligent agents or natures, and proper different persons, almost in the complete and literal sense of the words as used among men.

I shall not make it my business to attempt to destroy any of these solutions. I freely acknowledge, that these methods of reconciling the strange and jarring expressions of the primitive writers, are candid and ingenious; and some of them have some colour and support from Scripture, as well as from the writings of the fathers themselves; yet after all the mollifying constructions of interpreters, I think still the diffi-

culties can scarce be solved upon that hypothesis, without allowing too many catachreses, and too hard figures of speech, by speaking of God like a creature, and of a creature like God. These lay a foundation for very obscure and perplexed ideas, and thereby introduce perpetual contests between learned men, concerning the sense of the fathers.

May it not be lawful, therefore, to propose another method of reconciling the various and seeming inconsistent expressions of the primitive fathers concerning the *logos?* The proposal is as follows:

If the same single subject, the same simple *logos*, cannot sustain such different and contrary characters, let us inquire whether the *logos* be not a complex subject, made up of two distinct subjects, each of which has had the appellation of *Logos*, or the Word, both in the jewish and christian writings?

May we not suppose the *Logos*, or Word, considered as something in the godhead analogous to a power or virtue, to be infinite, uncreated, co-essential, and co-eternal with God the Father, as being of his very essence, and in this sense true God? May not this sometimes be represented in a personal manner, as distinct from the Father? Would not this be the proper subject of the most sublime attributions given to the *Logos?*

May we not suppose also, that in some unknown moment of the divine eternity, God, by his sovereign will and power, produced a glorious spirit in an immediate manner, and in a very near likeness to himself, and called him his Son, his only begotten Son? Would not this be a proper subject for all the inferior attributions? Might not this be that *Logos* of Philo, and the other ancient Jews, who was called the "first-born of God," the "eldest archangel," the "man after God's own image?" &c. And might not this be the human soul of our blessed Saviour?

Supposing further this angelic spirit to be assumed into a personal union with the divine *logos*, from the first moment of his existence, might he not be called the Son of God also, upon this account? May it not be said, that true godhead is communicated to the Son of God in this manner, and that by the free will of the Father? "For it pleased the Father that the fulness of the godhead should dwell in him," *Col.* i. 19. And in this sense the Father may be called the author and the cause both of his existence, his godhead, and all his powers; for though the godhead of the *logos*, or divine wisdom, be essential to the nature of God, and eternally independent, yet it may be communicated, that is, united, to an inferior spirit, by the will of the Father, without any diminution of its divine independency. Now by virtue of this personal union, or inhabitation, of the divine mind, or wisdom, in this glorious angelic being, the Son becomes more eminently "the brightness of his Father's glory," and "the express image of his person."

Then will it not follow, that this whole complex being, *viz.* God and a creature, might be that *logos*, or Word of God, which the Scripture so frequently speaks of in the Old and New Testament? Might not this be the glorious God-angel, who appeared to the patriarchs, as an angel, and as a man; and assumed the names and titles of *God, Jehovah, the Almighty, the God of Abraham, &c.* Might not this be that sacred *Logos*, that Word of the Lord, who visited the prophets, and holy men of old, and brought divine messages to them? Might not this be that God, and Jehovah, "who led the Israelites through the Red Sea, in the pillar of cloud and

fire," and that Christ whom "they tempted in the wilderness?" In short, might not this be that *logos*, or glorious person, called *the Word of God*, by whom God transacted all his ancient affairs in the creation of the world, and in the government of his church? And would not this complex being be a proper subject to receive either the divine or creatural ascriptions which are given to Christ in Scripture, and in the ancient fathers?

Might not this *logos*, in the complex character of God and a creature, or the Son of God, inhabited personally by eternal wisdom, according to Scripture, *in the fulness of time* assume flesh and blood into union with himself? Might he not thus be made *in the likeness of man*, become complete God-man, and be sent into this world, that he might become a Redeemer and Saviour, by his death, his resurrection, and his succeeding advancement in heaven?

May not this be the true scriptural notion and description of the person of Christ, or God incarnate, *God manifest in the flesh?* Is not this that Son of God who is *one with the Father*, as he is *the wisdom of God?* Who was *the angel of the Lord*, and the *angel of the covenant*, as he was the soul of Christ before his incarnation? And who is the man Jesus, the perfect Mediator, since he was made partaker of flesh and blood? And may not this be supposed to be the easiest and happiest way of reconciling the different and almost inconsistent characters, which are attributed to the *logos* by the ancients? Where one single being is not a sufficient subject to sustain both characters, a complex subject may easily sustain them.

So some of the ancient philosophers supposed man to be one single being, and attributed all the powers and properties both of reason and vegetation, to the human animal: But the moderns having well considered, that the powers of reasoning, and the powers of vegetation, cannot belong to the same simple subject, one being the property of matter, and the other of mind, they are led necessarily to infer, that man is a compound being, made up both of matter and mind: The Scripture itself also confirms this inference, and assures us of the truth of it, by making the soul and body of man two distinct beings.

Thus Scripture and reason seem to agree to inform us, that as man, with his distinct properties of reason and vegetation, is composed of body and spirit; so they lead us to suppose, that the pre-existent nature of Christ, which is called the *logos*, is composed, or constituted of God and a creature, or an inferior spirit, personally inhabited by the divine Word, to which the distinct properties of God and a creature may be attributed.

SECTION VIII.

CONSIDERATIONS WHICH TEND TO SUPPORT THIS CONSTRUCTION OF THE PRIMITIVE FATHERS.

CONSIDERATION I. The ancient Jews, *viz.* the targumists, or commentators, and Philo, give us these descriptions, both of a divine and an inferior *logos*, and they seem to have borrowed them from the Bible, and their old traditional expressions of it. Let it be observed now, that these persons lived near the time when the New Testament

was written, and that the apostles themselves were Jews, and used the phrases of their country, and that the primitive Christians learned their notions of theology from the apostles, and from others of the first Christians, who were themselves converted Jews. Thence we may naturally and easily suppose, that those phrases, idioms, sentiments, and manners of thinking and speaking, which were borrowed by the Jews from their traditional sense of the Old Testament, might be the common and most natural language and sentiments of the first Christians. The phrases and notions of both of them concerning the *logos*, have something akin, and the strain of their expressions are plainly tinctured by similar and correspondent ideas.

Consideration II. It is evident, from what we have said before, that the holy Scripture gives the name of *Logos*, or *Word of God*, to a certain power of the divine nature, whereby *all things were created;* Psalm xxiii. 6, and 2 Peter iii. 5. It gives the same name also to our blessed Saviour in his incarnate state; 1 *John* i. 1, 2, and *Rev.* xix. 13. So that here is a *logos* who is true God, and a *logos* who is a man.

It is also manifest, that our Saviour, since his incarnation, is a complex person: He is "the child born," and "the mighty God," *Isaiah* ix. 6. He is *God manifest in the flesh*, 1 Tim. iii. 16. He is a man *of the seed of David*, and *God over all, blessed for ever*, Rom. ix. 5.

It is generally agreed also, that before his incarnation, he was *the angel of the Lord*, and also *the almighty God:* He was "the God who fed Jacob, and the angel who redeemed him;" *Gen.* xlviii. 15, 16. He was the *man* who wrestled with Jacob, and God, the Lord of hosts, whose name and memorial is *Jehovah;* Gen. xxxii. 24, and *Hosea* xii. 5; which seem to imply a complex nature, as I have manifested at large in another discourse, *Of the Glory of Christ as God-man.**

Now since the Scripture has revealed to us a superior and inferior nature in Christ, to sustain the divine and creatural characters attributed to him, why may we not suppose the primitive fathers, under the influence of these scriptural representations, might be led to attribute both divine and creatural characters to Christ, the *Logos*, the Son of God, in his pre-existent state, though they do not evidently keep up the just and distinct ideas of two beings, united in one complex person.

Consideration III. Perhaps this construction of the ancient christian writers, may be the easiest and happiest method of reconciling their strange and jarring expressions, both to one another, and to Scripture; and, perhaps, it may be the only, or, at least, the best way, whereby we can affix clear, distinct, and intelligible ideas to them. Let us make a few experiments.

When Theophilus says, "the *Logos*, or eternal Word, which was always in the heart of God, was afterwards produced, generated, and became a son;" this may be explained, by God's producing a human spirit, or angelic *logos*, a first-born son, by a voluntary act of his will, and then assuming this first-born son into a personal union with his divine Word, or wisdom: And thus he made this divine Word become his Son. The divine Word, which had an existence before, was then made his Son, by union with his Son. And this is very agreeable to Scripture language; for when, in *John* i. 14, the Word is said to be *made flesh*, all Christians agree, that it signifies only, that "flesh was assumed into a personal union with the Word."

* This Discourse was published in 1746.

If Justin Martyr, who in the judgment of the learned speaks the sense of the other ante-nicene fathers, assert the *logos* "always to have co-existed with the Father, and that he was then begotten, when God by him created the world;" this may be exactly explained in the same manner as Theophilus: And all the rest of the fathers, before and after the council of Nice, who speak of the *logos* existing eternally with God, before he was generated and became a Son, may be interpreted in the same manner.

When they speak of the generation of the Son, by the will and power of God the Father; when they assert the Father to be the cause, fountain, spring of his existence, and of all his powers; when they call him *conditio*, δημιούργημα, κτίσμα; *a creature*, and "the first-born work of the Spirit," &c. Here is an angelic *logos*, or human soul, a proper subject for those inferior ascriptions.

And when the Father is said to be the author of his godhead, or to communicate godhead to him, this is done by the Father's voluntary act of uniting the divine *logos*, that is, his own eternal word or wisdom, to this angelic spirit, and by this union the angelic *logos* becomes true God, and *the* more *express image of the Father*.

If the ancients speak of the divine wisdom as being created, first-created, the first of the works of God: If they call the *logos*, "God of God," the "second God," "light of light," &c. since it is granted these expressions may have a reference to the temporal ante-mundane generation, they may all be explained by the real derivation or production of the angelic *logos* from God, who in the first moment of his existence was united to, and made one with God's eternal *logos*, that is, the divine word, or wisdom, and thus became a glorious and proper medium of God's manifestations and operations, which is the ancient and original notion of the Λόγος, or Word.

As the divine *Logos* becomes the Son of God, and receives inferior attributions, by a personal union to the angelic *logos*, who is God's first-born Son, so the angelic *logos*, or human soul of Christ, who is properly the Son of God, becomes true God, and receives supreme attributions, by his most intimate and personal union with the divine *Logos*, or godhead, and thereby becoming one complex person of action and passion. The common figure of the *communicatio idiomatum*, in all languages, makes this very easy and intelligible.

Thus in the language of philosophy and the schools, when man is called a rational animal, we do not suppose that an animal body can be the subject of rational properties; but the animal is made rational by being personally united to a rational spirit, and thereby becoming one person, one complex principle of action and passion.

This would account also for any such expressions as an inferior nature being made God, θεοποιόμενος, by a participation of the godhead of the Father. The human or angelic *logos*, who is most properly the Son of God, was made, or became God, by the union of the divine *Logos* to him, even as in scripture language, "The Word became flesh," by the union of the flesh to him, *John* i. 14. And in the same sense Justin Martyr calls the *Logos* σαρκοποιηθείς, *made flesh*. Nor is it strange that any expressions of Origen should be so interpreted, when we consider that he supposes the soul and body of Christ, even the whole man, to be made partaker of godhead, and to pass into God, or become God in the same manner, κεκοινωνηκότα τῆς θειότητος εἰς θεὸν μεταβεβηκέναι, *contra Celsum, Libro* III. And the council of Antioch says, "The body that was born of the virgin was united to godhead, and was made God," τῇ θεότητι ἥνωται καὶ τεθεοποίηται.

This hypothesis easily explains how the *logos* comes to be called *the angel*, for in his lower nature he is a separate created spirit, and thus may well be called the messenger, the minister, the servant of his Father. This shews how he is subject to the Father in all things, how he is employed, and sent by the Father on various transactions, how he derives his godhead from the Father, how the Father is God originally, and of himself; how the Son acknowledges the Father to be eminently the only true God, though the eternal deity of the Father and the Son be really the same.

This supposition also makes it easy to conceive how the *logos* himself might become passible, and condescend to endure the sensation of sorrow, pain, and dying agonies: For if we suppose this angelic *logos* to be the human soul of Jesus Christ, then as it was united to godhead in its pre-existent state, and often appeared in the form and majesty of God, so it was united to a human body at the incarnation, it emptied itself of its ancient glory, ἐκένωσεν ἑαυτὸν, *Phil.* ii. 7, and became subject to the weaknesses and the painful sensations of animal nature. Thus the Son of God himself really and truly suffered on the cross for sinners. A glorious and unparalleled example of humility and amazing love, exerted in such a manner as the vulgar explications of this doctrine could never shew!

Thus I have given my reasons briefly for supposing, that many of the expressions of the ancients may be construed into the notion of a complex *logos*, or a double nature belonging to Christ before the incarnation, *viz.* the divine Word, and a created, or inferior spirit.

Objection. But it will be readily and immediately objected against all this discourse, that it is in vain for us to contrive suppositions, and invent schemes, how the language and expressions of the primitive fathers may be understood, when it is sufficiently evident from a multitude of places in their own writings, that they had no such notion of a complex *logos*, made up of two distinct beings, *viz.* the true God, and an inferior spirit: It is manifest that they had but one single idea under the term *logos*, and they ascribed all the superior and inferior characters to the same single spirit.

Answer I. If a man were to begin, and read over all the fathers with this very view and design, to search for a complex *logos*, it is probable that he might find this opinion favoured in more of their expressions, since several of those ancients with whom I have the greatest acquaintance, use so many expressions that can hardly be construed into any just consistence any other way. Nor is this a mere fond and imaginary conjecture of my own: The learned author of *Primitive Christianity Vindicated, against Mr. Whiston*, in his *Second Letter to the Author of the History of Montanism*, seems to indulge this opinion. He tells us that Origen supposed the human soul of Christ, united to his divine nature, to exist long before his incarnation. See page 43. "It is," says this author, "a very ancient tradition among the Jews, that the soul of the Messiah existed from the beginning of the world." And some learned men are of opinion, that certain passages of Scripture cannot be so easily and naturally interpreted without this notion: Such as John iii. 13, *No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man, which is*, or was, *in heaven;* and *Phil.* ii. 7, "that he emptied himself." Origen was no stranger to this opinion, when he says, "perhaps the soul of the Son in its perfection, was in God and his fulness, and coming out thence when he was sent by the Father, took a body of Mary." And again, upon these words of John the Baptist, *After me cometh a man which is preferred before me;*

for he was before me, John i. 30. He says thus, "That it is spoken of Christ, that we may learn that the man, or manhood, also of the Son of God, mixed with his divinity, had a prior subsistence to his birth of the virgin. This man," says the learned author, "must be the rational soul; which is confirmed by the appearances of the Messiah made to the patriarchs and jewish fathers in the form of a man, the proper indication of a human soul." Hence then we may justly infer, that the rational soul united to the Word, was the first created essence, or first fruits of the creation, holy to the Lord, and claimed by the Son as his own right. For if he was to be first, or have the pre-eminence in all things, can that advantage be denied him in relation to his soul? Origen, who holds its pre-existence, seems to allow it to be first created. For speaking of the formation of wisdom before the world, he says, "God created ἔμψυχος σοφία, an animated wisdom, or, wisdom with a soul." In another place he calls this, ἔμψυχος λόγος. And this opinion appeared so very reasonable, that we find some marks of it in the later centuries. For the author of the *Meditations* called St. Austin's, distinguishes between eternal wisdom, the Son of God, and the first created wisdom, which he makes to be a rational and intellectual mind.

Again, the same learned author, in his *Considerations on Mr. Whiston's Historical Preface*, pages 55, 56, supposes, "The Son of God may be called ποίημα, κλίσμα, &c. not only in respect of his coming forth to create the world, in which sense he is "the beginning of all things," but also in respect of a created intellectual nature, which he is supposed, by some, to have assumed at the beginning of the creation, as the first fruits of it." And the same author grants, that "he may, perhaps, be mentioned oftener by the ancient fathers in relation to his coming forth, and to his created nature, than his eternal subsistence." And if it should be so in Scripture too, which he doth not actually grant, yet he proposes this reason for it, *viz.* "That it concerns us more to know him in this state of humility and condescension, than in that of his natural immensity and exaltation, since it is owing to his humility that we are both made and redeemed." Now the author from whom I cite these passages has testified both his zeal and his learning in several of his works against the arian cause.

The late reverend Bishop Fowler, in his *Defence of his Discourse of the Descent of the Man Christ Jesus*, gives his testimony also, that Origen was of this opinion: And perhaps this might be the occasion why that ancient writer sometimes exalts the *logos* to such sublime characters of divinity, as represent him to be αὐτοσοφία, &c. the very wisdom, the very truth of God himself, and makes him co-eternal with the Father, and at other times calls him θεὸς δεύτερος, θεὸς γενητὸς, θεοποιούμενος, &c. a "second God," a "made God," &c.

I have also the concurring suffrage of Mr. Baxter; in his *Methodus Theologiæ*, page 96, he seems to be of this opinion concerning some of the fathers, by what observations he had made in reading the ancients. For when he had there recited several of the expressions of the primitive fathers *viz.* Justin, Tatian, Theophilus, Irenæus, Clemens Alexandrinus, Origen, Dionysius Alexandrinus, &c. he adds "*et videntur quidem eorum seculorum nonnulli putasse duplicem in Christo nondum incarnato naturam fuisse; primam divinam, quâ sapientia Dei seu* λόγος, *æternus fuit, & secundam, quam solam Arius agnovit, creatam super-angelicam, creaturarum primogenitam & administram.* Some of the writers of those ages seem to think there were two natures in Christ before his incarnation: The first divine, whereby he was the wisdom of God, or his eternal Word: The second

a super-angelic created nature, first-born of creatures, ministering to God, &c. which is the only nature the arians allow." And the author adds, that " Gregory Thaumaturgus seems to have believed this double nature." I confess I was surprized, when I had almost finished this dissertation, to find such a sentence in this learned author. And it is evident that nothing but the various expressions of the fathers themselves could have constrained him to have spoken thus, since Mr. Baxter himself did not approve of this opinion; but it is plain that he could hardly interpret some of the fathers into any other sense.

Answer II. Yet I readily grant, and believe, that the greatest part of them do not seem to have any distinct idea of a complex *logos*, or a double nature in Christ before the incarnation; for they frequently seem to apply both increated and created characters to the same single being. But the question is, Whether a reader can have any clear and distinct ideas under this language of theirs? Whether they can be made to talk very consistently with themselves in this strange phraseology? Are we not forced to correct the philosophy of those ancients, who apply rationality and vegetation to man as one simple animal substance? Do we not plainly find, that though their ideas are right in general, when they ascribe both these to man, yet they mistook a complex for a simple being? And might not the primitive fathers fall into such an innocent mistake in theology, when they determined too hastily, that both the divine and inferior ideas ascribed to Christ in his pre-existent state belonged to one simple *logos?* Will all their invented relief of natural subordination, or economical subordination, of strong metaphors and catachreses, ever fairly reconcile the variety and seeming contradiction of their expressions, without such a supposition as this, of a complex or twofold nature in Christ?

We may reasonably suppose that they had derived from Scripture, and from the apostles, and the traditions of apostolic men, the great doctrine of the *logos* being the eternal divine word, or wisdom, whereby God contrived and created the world: They had also derived from the same springs the doctrine of the *logos*, who was *the Son of God, the beginning of the creation, the first-born of every creature, the only begotten of the Father;* and that though he was produced, as they express, by his will and power, yet it was in some such immediate and superior way, as is rather called generation than creation in Scripture, *that in all things* Christ *might have the pre-eminence*, Col. i. 18.

Now hence perhaps might arise some of their mistakes, or, as Bishop Bull calls them, their strange, hard, and uncautious expressions:

1. Because Scripture, or apostolic tradition, doth not directly call this inferior or angelic *logos*, who was the Son of God, a creature, and rank him with other created beings, some of them might raise him entirely up to godhead, and give him the very same simple numerical idea with the eternal *logos*, or the divine wisdom.

2. Because this angelic *logos* was truly the Son of God, and his only begotten Son, therefore they might attribute a sort of sonship to the eternal *logos*, or divine wisdom, entirely abstracted from this angelic being.

3. When they found supreme and inferior characters attributed to a person, whose name was *the Logos*, or Word of God, they did not infer the union of the divine eternal *Logos* and of this first-born Son of God, who is also called the *Logos*, into one complex person; but they, by an easy mistake, might blend them together into one simple substance; and thus they attributed inconsistent properties and actions to one and the same simple subject. Whereas Scripture seems to inform us, that these different

properties might be more safely and happily attributed to this glorious person, composed of the divine and the angelic *logos* united, that is, the human soul of Christ with the indwelling godhead.

SECTION IX.

CONCLUSION.

Upon the whole, it appears, that the ancient jewish writers give us an account of a divine *memra*, or *logos*, or word, which is of the very essence of God, and is represented as a power of the divine nature, and they speak also of another *logos*, or *word*, which is the first-born of all creatures, a glorious super-angelic spirit; there appear also plain traces, and evident footsteps of the same divine and inferior *logos* among the primitive christian writers. Now these ancient intimations and notices of a twofold *logos* in human writings, under the sacred and superior conduct of the Old and New Testament, lead us to suppose, that our blessed Saviour, who is the true *Logos*, or *Word of God*, had a double nature before his incarnation, and that his human soul had a real existence as the Son of God, and a personal union to deity, before the foundation of the world.

From this representation of things, there are these two very considerable advantages derived:

I. Hereby both the divine and human natures of Christ receive more honour, and more exalted dignity, than the common representation of this matter will allow.

If the *Logos*, in its divine sense, signify an essential power of the deity, then this divine *Logos* has proper supreme godhead, and, shall I say, shares with the Father even in self-existence and independency; for the *logos* belongs to the very nature of God; and yet it is sometimes represented in a distinct personal manner, for wise purposes, in the holy Scriptures; for it has a sufficient distinction from the Father to lay a just foundation for such a figurative personality. Whereas, in the common and current exposition of these ancient writers, as well as of Scripture, there are too many secondary and inferior characters ascribed to the *logos* in its divinest sense, or to the divine nature of Christ. In the language of the primitive Christians, and in the avowed declarations of the athanasian writers, he is denied the dignity of self-existence and independency, and is declared to derive both his real existence and his godhead, his power and all his glory, from the Father, and that, as the ancients assert, by the Father's will too, though this will is sometimes construed into a mere acquiescence. Now these derivative characters or properties seem a little to diminish the lustre, and degrade the supreme dignity of the godhead of Christ.

The human nature of Christ also in this my explication is most gloriously exalted far above all the ideas of such a common human soul, which, according to the usual hypothesis, began its existence when the child Jesus was conceived or born: Whereas in the scheme which I propose, the human soul of Christ is a sublime spirit,* superior to all angels and every created being, the first-born of every creature, and possessed of such capacious powers, as, by virtue of the indwelling godhead, perhaps might be some

* How this sublime and singular character is every way consistent with the idea of a true human soul, I have shewn in a *Treatise on the Glory of Christ as God-man*, which may possibly appear in the world hereafter. This treatise was published in 1746.—See also page 458.

way employed in the great and wondrous transactions of creation and providence in past ages.

Now let it be considered to what a superior height this doctrine advances the whole person of Christ, God and man: Nor let those who love the Lord Jesus in sincerity be afraid to hear of his various glories.

II. Another considerable advantage that arises from this exposition of the Jews and the christian fathers into the sense of a complex *logos*, is this, that it lays a foundation for reconciling those great and bitter contentions that have troubled the church in almost all ages from the beginning of Christianity. Surely we should think it a mighty happiness, if there were any possibility of uniting the contending parties into one scheme of trinitarian doctrine, agreeably to the representations of Scripture: And I know no hypothesis bids so fair for it as this, if the spirit of candour and unprejudiced sincerity, the spirit of love and zeal, and unity, be given down from on high, to influence us all in our sacred studies on this subject.

In this scheme the athanasians, and all the orthodox trinitarians, find that sacred doctrine, for which they so justly and zealously contended, *viz.* the true and proper deity of Jesus Christ personally united to an inferior nature, even of the soul and body of the man Jesus. The sabellians, and all unitarians, may find here the unity of the divine nature not divided into three conscious minds, or three infinite spirits, but diversified, or distinguished, into God the Father, with his two distinct, essential powers, the Word and the Spirit. Here the arians and semiarians may read all the exalted properties of their *logos*, that is, the pre-existent soul of our Saviour, for which they shew so warm and constant a zeal in all their writings, and may be conducted onward to his indwelling godhead.

I confess, the two more eminent contesting parties in this very question, about the sense of the ancients, are the arians, or semiarians, and the athanasians: And while one of them imagines the fathers, in all their expressions, intend a *logos* inferior to godhead, and the other supposes them to describe and represent him as true and eternal God, it is my opinion, that all the expressions of the ancients can scarce ever be reconciled fairly and entirely to either of these extremes: But a supposition, that God and a creature, united before the foundations of the world, may compose this glorious person, this *logos*, leads the way to allow both of these parties to be in a great measure in the right with regard to the fathers, and happily to reconcile them in one sentiment and opinion, without the least derogation from the supreme deity of Christ, as revealed in the holy Scriptures.

If I might venture into a comparison on this occasion, I would liken the writings of the ancients concerning the *logos* to a mine of rich metal, where two travellers taking up the ore, find some brighter, and some baser properties in the mass. One of them asserts, that the metal is all silver, and he gives the most favourable and exalted turn that he can to the coarser phænomena of lead, which discover themselves there. The other sinks and beclouds the brighter phænomena of silver, till he has construed the whole mine into lead. Here it is possible that a less knowing traveller may come by, and happen to make such an experiment on the mingled mass as discovers that there is both silver and lead united in the same ore: By this means the different properties appear to belong to the different metals, and the contenders are reconciled.

Thus I have gathered what light and assistance I could out of ancient jewish and

christian writings, to explain and confirm that doctrine concerning the *Logos*, or *Word*, which seems to be revealed and contained in the holy Scripture: And I hope I have said nothing inconsistent with the divine grandeur or godhead of our blessed Saviour, nor with any necessary articles of faith. I am sensible the performance must on many accounts be very defective. But if I have been so happy, as to have given any hints, whereby persons of greater learning, health, and sagacity, may be encouraged to pursue, to establish, or correct the hypothesis which I have proposed, and to introduce clearer ideas into divine things, by a further explication of this great mystery of godliness, I shall have cause to rejoice, and give thanks to God.

If I have asserted any peculiar opinions with too positive an air, and used the language of unbecoming assurance in doubtful matters, in the course of this dissertation, I here disclaim and retract it. I am but a searcher into the deep things of the gospel, and endeavour, according to my slender measure, to trace out the unsearchable riches and glories of the person of my Redeemer God and man. Now, upon the best survey I can take, both of the revelation of Scripture, and the expressions of ancient writers, I am inclined to believe, that his human soul was formed, and united to his divine nature before the foundation of the world: And as both parts of the constitution of his person are called the *Logos*, or *Word*, so the whole complex person is manifested under the same name. I adore the Word dwelling in flesh. I trust in him for eternal life, and call him, as Thomas did, *John* xx. 28, *My Lord, and my God.* To him be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

DISSERTATION V.

OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

SECTION I.

THE GENERAL IDEAS OF THE WORD AND SPIRIT.

THE great and blessed God, considered in his own nature, is far superior to all our thoughts, and exalted high above our most raised apprehensions. It is utterly impossible for a creature to search out the almighty Creator to perfection. When we shall be admitted to heaven, and behold him in the light of glory, we shall then *see him as he is* in himself; but even then, and for ever, our knowledge of him will be imperfect, for we are creatures and not God, and our understandings will never be infinite.

In this world we must be content to know him as he has revealed himself in the light of grace, and discovered himself in his word: And because we are not capable of taking in heavenly ideas in their own sublimest nature, God has been pleased to teach us the heavenly things that relate to himself, in earthly language; and by way of analogy to creatures, he has let us know something what God is.

Among all the creatures that come within the reach of our common and obvious cognisance, human nature is the most perfect, and therefore it has pleased the great and glorious God, by resemblances drawn from ourselves, to accommodate the descriptions of himself to our capacities. When he speaks of his own nature in the language of men, he often uses the names of human parts, and members, and faculties, to represent his own properties and actions, thereby that he may bring them within the notice of the lowest capacity, and the meanest understanding among the children of men. Therefore he speaks of his *face*, to signify the discoveries of himself; his *eyes*, to describe his knowledge; his *heart*, to describe his thoughts; his *hand* and *arm*, to signify his power and activity; and his *mouth*, to denote his resolutions or revelations.

But since, in the composition of human nature, there are two distinct parts, a soul and a body, and the soul is much the nobler and more exalted principle, it has also pleased God to rise above corporeal images, and to describe himself, his attributes, properties, powers, and operations, by way of analogy to a human soul. We know by our own consciousness, or by an inward inspection into ourselves, that our soul, or spirit, is a being which has understanding and will, thoughts, inclinations, knowledge, desires, and various powers to move the body: Therefore our Saviour has told us, *God is a spirit*, and the brightest and sublimest representations of God in Scripture, are such as bear an analogy and resemblance to the soul of man, or a spiritual thinking nature.

As the chief faculties of our souls are the mind and will, or rather a power of knowing,

and a power of acting, so God seems to have revealed himself to us as endued with two divine faculties, his Word or Wisdom, and his Spirit, or efficient power. It is by this Word, and this Spirit, that he is represented in Scripture as managing the great concerns of the creation, providence, redemption, and salvation: And these three, *viz.* God the Father, his Word, and his Spirit, are held forth to us in Scripture as *one God*, even as the soul of man, his mind, and his will, are one spiritual being.

Now though the soul be the nobler part in man; though the brightest, the fairest, and most correspondent resemblances of God, are borrowed from the soul; yet when we consider the terms which are used to express the sacred Trinity, as well as the divine essence, we find them borrowed from the body, as well as from the soul of man; and probably this was done also, that the lowest capacities among men might attain some idea of them.

The first person in the Trinity is called *the Father*, which is a name given him as he is the first origin, spring, and creator of all things, as he is the former of the human soul and body of our Lord Jesus Christ, his Son, and as he is represented as the prime Agent, employing his Word, and his Spirit, in the great affairs of creation, providence, redemption, and salvation. Now this term, *Father*, is evidently derived from some resemblance which he bears to human nature, or mankind, in the body, as much as in the soul.

If we consider the second person of the Trinity under the character of *the Son*, this is apparently borrowed from mankind in the same manner.

The term *logos*, which denotes the second person in the Trinity, abstracted from flesh and blood, signifies both *reason* and *word:* And therefore we may suppose the sacred analogy borrowed both from the body, and from the soul of man. It is borrowed from the soul of man, as *logos* signifies *reason;* from the body of man, as it signifies *a word;* or from body and soul together, as it signifies *an external word*, or *speech*, manifesting internal wisdom or reason.

In the same manner the term *spirit*, which denotes the third of the sacred Three, does both in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, signify *the breath;* it signifies also *vital activity*,* and it signifies *an intelligent principle.* And therefore we may suppose the sacred analogy, and use of this word, to be derived both from the body and the soul of man. It is derived from the soul, as it signifies an intelligent principle of action; it is derived from the body, as it signifies breath. And perhaps it is derived from the body and soul united, as it signifies vital activity and efficience, though in this sense it seems to be chiefly borrowed from the soul.

There are several places in Scripture where the Spirit of God seems to bear an analogy to breath, and to signify *the breath of God;* as Psalm xxxiii. 6, *By the word of the Lord, were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.* Here the term רוח, that is, *breath* or *spirit*, is either a synonymous term for *word*, in the first part of the verse, which is formed by the breath; or it signifies *the Spirit of God*, as a divine power, by way of analogy to human breath. So Psalm civ. 20, 30, *Thou takest away their breath, and* the creatures *die.—Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, and they are created;* that is, "thou sendest forth the breath of life by the agency of thy Spirit."

* The term *spirit*, in other languages, as well as in English, signifies *power, vigour*, and *vital activity.* It is so taken in several places of Scripture: I need cite no more than John vi. 63, *It is the spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing: The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life.*

So Job xxxiv. 14, 15, *If he gather unto himself his Spirit and his breath, all flesh shall perish together*, that is, if he withhold his vital influence, which gives breath to all animals. Job xxxiii. 4, *The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life.* And *Mal.* ii. 15, where the prophet argues, that God made but one woman for one man, *yet he had the residue of the Spirit;* that is, more vital influence to create more women if he had pleased. These two last texts may refer either to the animal life of man, which is maintained by breath; or to the rational soul, which in the jewish philosophy was the vital principle of the animal, both which seem to be included in that metaphorical language in Gen. ii. 7, *The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.*

Thus it appears, that as outward speech and breath are powers of the human body, as reason and vital activity, or efficience, are powers of the human soul, so the great God, in Scripture, has revealed himself to us as a glorious being, who has two eternal, essential, divine powers, which in condescension to our weakness, he is pleased to describe by way of analogy to our souls and bodies; and this he doth by the terms דבר and רוח in Hebrew, λόγος and πνεῦμα in Greek, and in English, *word* and *spirit*, or *speech*, and *breath*, or *reason* and *vital activity*, or *efficience*.

Though I call the Word and the Spirit two divine powers, to comport with the analogy which Scripture seems to have established between the idea of God, and the idea of man; yet I am far from determining precisely, what, or how great, is that real and divine difference which is between them, or what is the true and inward distinction between the essence of God himself, who is called the Father, and his Word, and his Spirit. It is represented in Scripture to be something more than such a difference as is between divine attributes, or nominal relations, and yet it seems to be something less than is between three distinct conscious minds, or three different intelligent agents, in the literal sense of the word. Perhaps in godhead the difference between the several powers or principles of action, may be much greater than they are in a human or created spirit. It is most likely there is no human idea that exactly answers it. This is a problem too high, and too hard for us to resolve, who know heavenly things only by way of distant analogy to things earthly, and have not yet learned the unspeakable words which St. Paul heard in paradise. This we know, that these two, *viz.* the Word and Spirit, are often in Scripture, as well as by the ancient Jews and first Christians, represented as divine powers; yet they are also by the sacred writers, by Jews and Christians, sometimes represented in a personal character, or in the way and manner of distinct personal agents. How this is to be accounted for, I have shewn in the sequel of this, as well as in other dissertations.

SECTION II.

THE PARTICULAR REPRESENTATIONS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN SCRIPTURE.

Having spoken in the former Discourse particularly of the *logos*, or Word of God, in its several senses, as it relates to Jesus Christ, or the second person in the Trinity, I apply myself now more directly to say a few things concerning the third person, or the blessed Spirit, so far as I can derive light from the holy Scriptures. Now if we consult them, I humbly conceive we shall find these following discoveries:

I. The Spirit of God is represented as a principle of divine operation, as the active power, or faculty of efficience belonging to the divine nature, in several places in Scripture.* It is exhibited to us as something in, and of God, which seems to be expressed and explained by power, virtue, and a principle of efficiency, or as a divine power belonging to godhead, together with the influence of it. See Luke i. 35, *The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee;* which two expressions seem to be parallel and explicative of each other; for our Saviour is called *the Son of God,* in that text, for this reason, because the Father *prepared a body for him,* as *Heb.* x. 5; or the power of God formed him in the womb, in a transcendent manner above other children, without any earthly father.

John iii. 34, Christ had "the Spirit of God given him without measure," which is explained, *Acts* x. 38, "Jesus of Nazareth was anointed with the Holy Ghost, and with power;" that is, "the Spirit of God dwelt in him with its powerful influences, and was represented as descending upon him at his baptism."

It was by this Spirit that he wrought miracles, and cast out devils, *Matt.* xii. 28. And yet when Christ taught the people, and diseased persons were brought to him, it is said, Luke v. 17, *The power of the Lord was present to heal them.*

The apostles were ordered to *wait* at Jerusalem *for the promise of the Spirit,* Acts i. 4, and ii. 33; that is, the Holy Spirit, which was promised to them; and this, in *Luke* xxiv. 49, is called their being *endued with power from on high:* The word is δύναμις in the original, which properly signifieth *force,* not *authority.*

When St. Paul preached to the Corinthians, 1 *Cor.* ii. 4, he confirmed his doctrine by the *demonstration of the Spirit and power;* that is, the Spirit of God, or divine power, concurring with him to work miracles for the proof of his gospel.

When it is said, *Psalm* xxxiii. 6, *By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath,* or Spirit, *of his mouth;* this seems to be a parallel text to those other Scriptures where God is described as creating, or establishing the earth, or the heavens, by his wisdom and by his power; that is, by his Word and Spirit; the two sacred persons being represented as divine powers, or principles of operation.

When the creatures languish and die, *Psalm* civ. 30, "he sends his Spirit, and they are created." Job xxvi. 13, *By his Spirit he hath garnished the heavens;* and "the Spirit of God made man," *Job* xxxiii. 4; which works are frequently ascribed to the power or efficience of God.

Zech. iv. 6, God will accomplish his work, *not by might, nor by power,* that is, neither by armies, nor the power of men, *but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts:* The Spirit, or power of God, stands in opposition to the power of men.

Christ is said to be raised from the dead by the power of God, *Ephes.* i. 19, and 2 *Cor.* xiii. 4; yet his resurrection is attributed to the Spirit, 1 *Peter* iii. 18, *Quickened by the Spirit.* So our resurrection is ascribed to the power of God, 1 *Cor.* vi. 14, which is attributed to the Spirit, *Rom.* viii. 11.

* Let it be noted here, that the word *power* is an ambiguous term, both in the English and in the learned languages; sometimes it signifies a faculty or principle of operation, and sometimes it denotes the force and influence of that faculty. Now the word being so often used, and these two senses of it being somewhat akin, it is hardly possible to limit the precise bounds of each of these senses or ideas in every place of Scripture. My chief design, therefore, in these citations, is to shew that the idea of a certain divine power, or faculty, with its force of operation, runs through them all.

In the phraseology of Scripture the *hand of the Lord*, the *finger of God*, the *arm of the Lord*, are various expressions to represent the divine principle of efficience, and especially in miraculous operations. Now there are several places wherein these are used to represent the Spirit of the Lord, and the same effects are attributed to the blessed Spirit, which shew that a principle of divine power, or efficacy, is the thing meant by the term *Spirit*.

In the Old Testament, the influence of this divine power was exerted on Bezaleel and Aholiab: They were *filled with the Spirit of God;* the divine power influenced them *to devise curious works, to work in gold and silver, &c.* for the tabernacle, *Exod.* xxxi. 2, 3, 6, and xxxv. 31, &c. So *the Spirit of the Lord began to move* Samson *at times, in the camp of Dan*, to perform works of strength or courage, *Judges* xiii. 25; that is, the divine principle of efficience wrought in him, or on him, for these purposes. So *the Spirit of the Lord came upon* Ezekiel, *and lifted him up*, which is called *the hand of the Lord* in several other places; see *Ezek.* i. 3, and iii. 12, 14, 22, and viii. 1, 3; where these words seem to be used promiscuously.

In the language of the apostles, the conversion of sinners, the assistance of ministers, the support of the afflicted, the preservation of the saints, &c. are sometimes expressly attributed to the power of God, which yet are the peculiar offices, or works, of the blessed Spirit, and in other parts of the sacred writings are attributed to him.

I do not explain the term *Spirit*, as I said before, to signify that attribute of God called *power*, or *omnipotence*, but rather, something in the divine nature which we may conceive of after the manner of men, by way of a power or faculty, represented in the various exercises or influences thereof towards creatures, and that frequently for their instruction, sanctification, comfort, or assistance, in any peculiar services, or miraculous operations. This seems to be the most common sense of it in the New Testament, and often in the Old. Upon this account it is called *the Spirit of knowledge*, Isaiah xi. 2; *the Spirit of wisdom and understanding*, Ephes. i. 17; *the Spirit of holiness*, Rom. i. 4; and *the Spirit of grace and supplication*, Zech. xii. 10; with regard to its various effects.

And herein appears a very plain difference between the socinian doctrine, and the scheme which I here propose; Socinus, Schlictingius, Crellius, and others of them, make the Spirit of God to signify the mere efficacy, or influence of God's power on creatures: And therefore they roundly and unanimously deny the Holy Spirit to be the true God. But, as Bisterfeld justly distinguishes in answer to Crellius, "the Spirit of God is indeed the power of God, *virtus Dei*, yet not that accidental power, which is the mere influence, or effect, of divine agency upon the creatures, but that essential, or substantial power, which is called a person in the divine nature." And though it is hard to determine, in every single text, whether the Spirit of God, mean the divine agent himself, or his influences, yet there are several Scriptures wherein it implies true and proper godhead, or a principle of action in the divine nature, and not merely the influence of that principle, or the effects of that power, as will plainly appear in the following parts of the discourse.

Now it is no wonder that the name of *Spirit of God*, in the scriptural writings, should be given to a power of the true God, or sometimes to the influence of a divine power, since this name was used even by heathens in those eastern nations, in the same sense, concerning their false gods. Nebuchadnezzar the king of Assyria,

and the king Belshazzar his son, and several of their courtiers, use this same expression, and say concerning Daniel, that "the spirit of the holy gods is in him:" See *Dan.* iv. 8, 9, 18, and v. 11, 14. Pharaoh, king of Egypt, uses the same language, *Gen.* xli. 38, "Can we find such a man as Joseph, in whom is the spirit of the gods," *Elohim?* That is, they supposed the powers of the gods dwelt in Joseph and Daniel, and instructed them in the knowledge of secrets. And if we had greater acquaintance with the ancient and oriental ways of speaking, it is very probable we should find, that when God spoke to his people the Jews, he used the same sort of language that was customary in those nations.

And if we consider the common phraseology of Scripture, which speaks of God acting by his word and Spirit, in a way of analogy to man acting by his natural powers of mind, will, conscience, his breath, his hand, his face, his eye, &c. far the greatest part of texts where the Spirit of God is mentioned, are most naturally explained, by supposing it a power of his nature.

What objections may be raised against this first head, shall be considered afterward.

II. Though the Spirit of God be represented sometimes as a power, or principle of action in the divine nature, yet in several places in Scripture it is set forth in a personal character, or under the idea of a person, distinct both from God the Father, and his Son Jesus Christ. The Spirit is spoken of in such a way as persons are represented in human language: I need not cite many Scriptures to prove this; see John xv. 26, *But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me.* Chapter xvi. 13, 14, *When the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth; for he shall not speak of himself, but whatsoever he shall hear that shall he speak; and he shall shew you things to come: He shall glorify me; for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.* And several other passages there are in the word of God which represent the Holy Spirit in a personal manner.

But it is not very hard to account for this personal representation of a power of the divine nature, when we consider,

1. That we know not how great is the distinction between different powers, or principles of agency, in so sublime and incomprehensible a nature as the godhead. *God is great, and we know him not;* Job xxxvi. 26.

2. The powers of man, *viz.* his mind, his will, his reason, his fancy, his conscience, are often represented as persons, in modern nations and languages; the man himself is sometimes described as conversing with his own spirit, with his soul, with his conscience, with his fancy, or reason, as though they were persons; and employing his reason or conscience, as agents, in any operation, even as God is said to send, or employ, his own Spirit in his sacred affairs, as a divine agent.

Besides, we may consider, that this personal manner of speaking was very customary among the eastern nations, and the sacred writers. They frequently personalise not only the powers of human nature, but the virtues, vices, dispositions of men, and even things without life, are often called sons and daughters, and exhibited to the reader, as though they were persons. But of this subject I have treated more at large in the *Dissertation on the Word "Person,"** and would not repeat it here. See also some further solution of this difficulty under the Answer to the First Objection.

* See Dissertation VI.

III. The Spirit of God is represented as so intimate with the divine nature, and so much one with God, that it is sometimes exhibited as God himself, even as the spirit of a man is properly the man himself, or his soul. It was common with hebrew, jewish writers, to speak of the spirit of a thing, to signify the thing itself. See Ephes. iv. 23, *Be renewed in the spirit of your mind;* that is, "let your mind itself be renewed:" Where we may suppose the same sort of pleonasm, as when the body or flesh of Christ is called *the body of his flesh,* Col. i. 22. So the Spirit of God is represented to us as one and the same with God, by analogy to human spirits, 1 Cor. ii. 10, 11, *The Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God: For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man but the Spirit of God;* that is, "as the spirit of a man knows the secret things of his own soul by a primary and immediate consciousness, inherent in himself, and not derived from any other; so the Spirit of God is as much that God whose Spirit he is, as the spirit of a man is the man himself; and therefore he knows the secrets of the godhead by a primary and immediate consciousness inherent in himself, and not derived from another."

There are other Scriptures wherein the Spirit may be taken for God himself, as Isaiah lxiii. 10, *They rebelled and vexed his Holy Spirit, therefore he was turned to be their enemy, and he fought against them.* God himself seems to be the proper object of their rebellion and provocation. So when David says, 2 Sam. xxiii. 2, 3, *The Spirit of the Lord spake by me—the God of Israel said—He that ruleth over men must be just.*

That which is done by this Spirit is done by God himself; and that which is done to this Spirit is represented as done to God himself.

When, in Acts xiii. 2, *The Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul, for the work whereunto I have called them,* it is very naturally interpreted as the voice of God by his Spirit; for it was God that called them to the ministry, and to him they were separated.

When Ananias, *Acts* v. 3, told a lie to the Holy Ghost, St. Peter says, verse 4, *Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God;* that is, to God dwelling in the apostles by his Spirit. So Isaiah xl. 13, *Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord; or, being his counsellor, hath taught him?* The Spirit of the Lord here seems to be put for God himself, as the spirit of a man in the same sort of sentence would be naturally construed the man himself, or his soul.

Psalm cxxxix. 7, *Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?* The plain meaning is, "Whither shall I go where the knowledge and power of God cannot reach me?" The Spirit of God is not a distinct being from God himself, or another conscious mind.

It is the Spirit of God, and it is God himself, who inspired the prophets; 2 *Peter* i. 21. 2 *Tim.* iii. 16. *Heb.* i. 1. It is the Spirit of God which dwells in his saints, as in a temple, for they are called *the temple of God,* 2 Cor. vi. 16, compared with 1 *Cor.* vi. 19.

It is the Spirit of God that sanctifies his people, that gives light and comfort, and hope to them, all which are attributed to God himself, and that not as acting by an under-agent, or an inferior nature, but by some intimate and essential power of his own. And were it not for some personal characters which are sometimes

attributed to the blessed Spirit, by a figurative and eastern manner of speech, I am persuaded scarce any reader of the Bible would ever have imagined, that the Spirit of God signified any thing else but a power of the divine nature, the influence of that power, or God himself acting by that power. The proof of the deity of the Holy Spirit is more particularly insisted on in *The Christian Doctrine of the Trinity*, Propositions VIII. IX.*

To confirm this head, *viz.* that "the Spirit of God," in some places, may signify God himself, let it be observed, that "the soul of God," in several Scriptures, signifieth God himself: Isaiah i. 14, *Your new moons—my soul hateth.* Isaiah xlii. 1, *My elect, in whom my soul delighteth.* Heb. x. 38, *If any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.* And this is a very common way of speaking among the Hebrews, for the soul of a man signifies the man himself, as well as the spirit of a man does.

In confirmation of the same position, let it be observed also, that as the term *Logos, Word*, or *the Second of the sacred Three*, is sometimes used to include the whole divine nature, though it more directly and frequently is explained by *wisdom;* so the term *Spirit*, though it more naturally and frequently signifies a divine principle of efficience, yet it may be used sometimes in a more extensive sense for the divine nature itself, as I have mentioned in the Seventh Dissertation, *On the Distinction of Persons in the Godhead.*

IV. As the Spirit of God, in some Scriptures, signifies a divine power, or principle of efficience in the godhead, and is called *the Third Person in the Trinity*, so in other texts the term *Spirit* denotes the influence or operation of this power, together with the various effects of it communicated to men, which are usually called the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit. Nor is it strange at all that this term should be thus used; for as *the Word of God*, in several places of Scripture, does plainly signify the second person in the blessed Trinity, who hath been employed through all ages to reveal the mind and will of God to men, so there are many other places wherein *the Word of God* signifies the revelation itself, or the effect of the agency of this divine word: And it is much more frequently used to signify either the Scripture, or some revelation of God to men, than to denote the second person in the Trinity.

Perhaps it is in this sense of influence and gifts, that we may best interpret some of those expressions, both in the Old Testament and the New, where the Spirit is said to be "given to men," to be "poured out upon men," to be "shed down on the apostles," to be "given by the laying on of hands," to "have the Spirit in greater or less degrees," to be "full of the Holy Ghost," or "filled with the Spirit," and "anointed with the Spirit." It is true, that such sort of expressions may be much better applied to a certain power of the divine nature, in its various agencies, than to a real proper person, or distinct conscious mind, and this is one reason that inclines me to think that the Holy Spirit is not another conscious mind, or a distinct person, in the full, proper, and human sense of the word. But still, if some of these scriptural phrases be explained concerning the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit, as the effects of the operation of that divine power, it may render the scriptural language a little more plain, easy, and intelligible in those places.

* See pages 310—314, 319, 320, in this Volume.

Note, There are some texts which mention "the word of God," wherein it is pretty hard to say, whether the person of Christ, or his revelation of divine things, be meant, as John x. 35, *He called them gods, unto whom the word of God came;* Heb. xiii. 7, *Them who have spoken unto you the word of God;* and in the next verse, *Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever;* Rev. i. 2, *John, who bare record of the word of God;* which is the remarkable character of this apostle, because he spake much of the *logos*, or of Christ under the title of *the Word*. And in like manner there may be some particular texts wherein it is difficult to determine whether "the Spirit of God" signify the very power of the divine nature itself, or whether it signify the effect of that power. I will mention but one, which is agreed to be dubious: Acts xix. 2, *We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost*. Some interpret "the Holy Ghost" here to signify his nature and existence, and some make it only to denote the effusion of his gifts, graces, or influences. But I do not think that this difficulty is of any very great importance, while it is agreed that these various gifts, graces, and blessings, conferred upon men, are all entirely attributed to the Spirit of God, or to a certain divine executive power, or principle of efficiency belonging to the divine nature.

Thus I have represented the clearest and best ideas I have yet attained, concerning the Spirit of God, who is generally called the third person in the sacred Trinity. As Christ, in his divine nature, is represented as the eternal word, or wisdom of the Father, which perhaps, may include in it the power of knowledge, or knowledge and volition; so the Spirit seems to be another divine power, which may be called the power of efficience: And though it is sometimes described in Scripture as a personal agent, after the manner of jewish and eastern writers, yet if we put all the Scriptures relating to this subject together, and view them in a correspondent light, the Spirit of God does not seem to be described as a distinct spirit from the Father, or as another conscious mind, but as an eternal essential power, belonging to the Father, whereby all things are effected: And thus the supreme godhead of the blessed Spirit is maintained in its glory.

It is proper here to take notice, that what I have said elsewhere of the *logos*, or divine Word may be also applied to the blessed Spirit, *viz.* That sometimes it carries with it an inadequate idea of godhead, when it signifies a power in the divine nature; and sometimes an adequate idea, when it intends God himself exerting that power. And this is no strange and unnatural supposition, since the same sort of phraseology is in frequent use when we speak of the soul of man, and its various powers; for sometimes by the words *reason, will, conscience*, &c. we mean those particular powers of the soul, which are inadequate ideas of the soul; at other times we mean the soul itself acting by one or another of those powers, and then the idea is full and adequate. And it is my opinion, that there can scarce be any cavils framed against these representations of the Spirit of God in Scripture, but what may be also raised against many of our human forms of speaking, concerning the spirit of a man, or some of his intellectual and active powers.

SECTION III.

AN OCCASIONAL REFLECTION ON THE GLORY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

As this explication of the doctrine of the blessed Spirit, seems to give a more easy and natural interpretation to most of the Scriptures where he is mentioned, so it tends to aggrandise the character of God, and of his divine Spirit, and exalt him infinitely above all created powers. Perhaps, no creature has any real proper efficience belonging to it, when abstracted from that universal influence of God, which is commonly called the divine concourse, whereby all beings are preserved and kept in actuation, according to their several natures, that is, according to the laws appointed by the Creator. And if so, then the divine Spirit may be the proper universal efficient of all created being and of all motion whatsoever. Let us inquire into this sentiment a little further.

When one body is moved by another moving body which impels it, I think it is agreed by the latest and best philosophers, such as Mr. Locke and Sir Isaac Newton, that this is not owing to any innate power in the impelling body, but that it is effected according to a law of motion, which the sovereign will of the Creator has appointed; so that the second body is not so properly moved by the first, as by the universal and all pervading force of that original divine efficacious volition, that one body should thus give place, when another of sufficient bulk and motion impels it.

This is yet more evident in the great law of attraction, or gravitation, which Sir Isaac Newton has found to be observed in the corporeal world. He acknowledges that there can no mechanical reason be given, why all bodies should gravitate toward a centre, or why all the parts of matter should have a mutual tendency toward each other; but it is the Creator's original and everlasting power and will, acting uniformly on all the parts of matter.

It is also this original will and power of the Creator, that gave a projectile motion to the several planetary bodies, and that this projectile motion concurring with, or rather resisting the gravitation toward their several centres, keeps the whole system of planets in their proper order and periodical revolutions.

And this is not only applicable to one body moving another; but when a spirit wills to move a body, it has no innate efficient power of its own to put the least atom in motion. A spirit can neither touch nor be touched. The strongest and wisest man upon earth cannot move a grain of sand or feather, by a mere act of his will; yet he can move the whole animal body to which he is particularly united, by an act of his will. The true meaning of it is this, that God has appointed that whensoever the human soul puts forth a volition, the limbs and muscles of that particular animal body shall be effectually moved. This motion is really and originally owing to the divine original volition, and his universal efficient power. Ἐν αὐτῷ γαρ καὶ ζῶμεν, καὶ κινούμεθα, καὶ ἐσμεν, Acts xvii. 28, *In*, or by, *him we live, and* are moved, *and have our being*.

Thus all the motion that is found in our material world is the proper effect of the prime divine volition and executive power, which continues through all ages, and pervades all worlds: Which acts according to its own supreme appointed laws, and is the real, but universal cause of all the motions of every atom in the universe: And

though the particular motions are attributed sometimes to bodies, by way of attraction or impulsion, and sometimes to minds, or spirits, as the effects of their volition, yet it is really owing to the infinite and all-pervading efficiency of the great God that formed at first, and still preserves and actuates the whole material system of beings, in one uniform and unchanging manner of operation. What a glorious and magnificent idea does this give us of the blessed Spirit, the executive power of God! Well may it be said, Gen. i. 2, *The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters*, or the watery chaos; that is, put the parts of it into their several proper motions, towards the formation of a beautiful world. And when creatures die, "God sends forth his Spirit, and they are created again, and the face of the animal and vegetable world is renewed by the agency of this Spirit;" *Psalm* civ. 30.

And how happily does this scheme correspond with the doctrine of miracles, which when they were wrought by our blessed Saviour, or by his apostles, are still attributed to the Spirit of God! As it is he who manages all nature by settled rules of his own, or of the divine *logos*, or wisdom, so it is he who unsettles the course of nature, and changes it when he pleases. It is he interposes with his immediate and miraculous influence, to act upon the various parts of matter, and give them motions or appearances contrary to his own established rules. He can bid the sun stand still, the shadow go backward, and command the waters of Jordan to run towards their spring. He causes the blind to see, he unstops the ear of the deaf, and puts vital motion into the dead.

When the divine *Logos*, or Word, performs a miracle, it is by the efficient force of this divine power, the Spirit of God, who is naturally and inseparably joined to the Word. When Christ Jesus wrought miracles on earth, he did it by virtue of godhead dwelling in him personally, in the character of the *Logos*, or Word, inseparably united to, and one with the blessed Spirit, though for special reasons in the divine economy, these miracles are rather ascribed to the Holy Spirit than to the divine *Logos*, or Word. And when he condescends to make any of the children of men conscious instruments of these miraculous performances, all that they can do is to lift up a prayer, and put forth a humble volition that such a supernatural effect may appear; but it is really by the agency of the blessed Spirit, that the laws of nature are counteracted: Nature herself obeys none but her sovereign, the miracle appears in its divine glory, and confesses the presence of a divine power.

Thus, by the concurrent demonstration of the Spirit of God, and of power, St. Paul preached the gospel among the heathen nations: The Spirit, as a divine efficient, impressed on his brain and on his tongue a train of languages which he understood not before, for he spake with a multitude of tongues; and the same blessed Spirit, as a divine efficient power, dictated to the apostle how to preach, and when to attempt a miraculous operation; and this glorious almighty agent produced the marvellous effect, surprized and amazed their eyes and their ears with sensible wonders, and enlightened and converted the souls of the blind heathens. He bid nature yield to miracle; he made heathenism in the heart give place to Christianity, and turned sinners into saints. Thus the Spirit of God is the universal efficient of all the common events in the course of nature, and of all supernatural appearances, whether in the kingdom of nature or of grace.

It is possible that some weak and unskilful reader may be ready to scruple this

representation, as though it attributed all the visible actions of men, whether good or bad, to the Spirit of God, and thus tended to represent God as the author of sin.

But those who understand the doctrine of the divine concourse to the works of inanimate nature, as well as to the actions of men, know, that there is a great deal of difference between the uniform universal agency and influence of a prime cause, according to his own original established laws of nature, and the particular agency of created intelligent causes. The particular actions of intelligent creatures may be very culpable, for abusing the general influence of the first cause to vicious purposes, while the prime, uniform, universal cause is blameless. The Spirit of God, though it be the universal efficient of all life and motion, yet is by no means chargeable with the guilt of a murderer, even though he gives vital motion and power to those limbs which perform a bloody action, for he does not incline the will of men to any iniquity, nor are their limbs moved but by the original force of his law of creation, according to their own free-will, and their own resolution.

It is granted by modern philosophers, that the divine will, or power, is the immediate cause of gravitation; and it is evident, that if a man push a boy from a precipice, it is gravitation that dashes out his brains; yet the man is properly guilty of the boy's death, and not the divine power, which is an universal and uniform agent, according to the settled laws of the creation.

I thought it necessary, for the sake of weaker readers, to remove this cavil by the way. But these last pages are rather an occasional digression, and a meditation *en passant*. Whether this be approved or no, it does not at all affect my present hypothesis, of explaining the sacred Three. It is time now to endeavour to solve some of the special difficulties relating to the doctrine of the Trinity, that are supposed to attend on this representation of the blessed Spirit.

SECTION IV.

OBJECTIONS ANSWERED.

Objection I. Is not the personal language, in which the Spirit of God is represented in Scripture, too strong and emphatical, to be applied merely to a divine power? Is he not described as a real proper person, an intelligent being, distinct from God the Father and the Son?

Answer I. I grant the personal representations of the Holy Spirit seem to be strong in some places of Scripture: But let it be noted, that the more general and constant language speaks of him as a power, or a medium of divine operation, in the very essence of God.

We must also consider that it was the frequent custom amongst the jewish writers, and the oriental nations, not only in their oratorical or poetical works but even in their common phraseology, to speak of powers and qualities under personal characters. Now it is no wonder at all that the blessed Spirit of God should be so represented, especially since we know not how great the real and divine distinction may be between God and his essential powers. This may be so great, for ought we know, as to lay a juster foundation for the ascription of personal characters to

the blessed Spirit, than can be found amongst any human powers or properties whatsoever.

Is not the wisdom of man, as well as the wisdom of God, represented in strong personal characters in the book of *Proverbs?* See Prov. i. 20—33, *Wisdom crieth without, she uttereth her voice in the streets, &c. Prov.* ii. 10—12; iii. 13—20; iv. 6—13; ix. 1; as well as in the eighth chapter, where it is supposed the second person in the Trinity is meant. Is not charity represented as a person, 1 *Cor.* xiii.? Is not the Scripture itself represented in a personal manner, as a prophet having foreknowledge and a power of speaking? Gal. iii. 8, *The Scripture foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached the gospel to Abraham.* Is not the law described as a person? Gal. iii. 24, *The law was our schoolmaster, to bring us unto Christ.* And in several other places, is not the grace of God exhibited as a person, labouring together with St. Paul? 1 Cor. xv. 10, *I laboured more abundantly than they all; yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.* And why may not the Spirit of God, or his efficient power, be so described too, since it has so great, so universal, and all-pervading an agency in the affairs of creation and salvation?

Are not the water and the blood described in a personal manner, as witnesses? οἱ μαρτυροῦντες, 1 *John* v. 8. Take these words in any sense, yet they are not real proper persons: Why then may not the Spirit be called a witness, and be represented personally too, whether in that verse it signifies a divine power, or the influence of that power?

Let it be observed, as I hinted before, that among men nothing is more naturally represented in a personal manner, than the several actions, qualities, or powers of human nature, *viz.* virtue, vice, wisdom, fancy, reason, conscience, will, &c. and this both in Scripture and in common writings. I will mention but one at present. The very approbation, and concurrent sentiments of St. Paul are called his spirit, and represented in a personal manner; 1 Cor. v. 4, *When ye are gathered together, and my spirit with* you; Col. ii. 5, *Though I be absent in the flesh, yet I am with you in the spirit, joying and beholding your order.* Now if the very will, inclination, and concurrent sentiments of a man, may be called the spirit of a man, and represented as being present, and acting in a distant place, is there not much more reason why a divine efficient power should be called the Spirit of God, and be represented as employed and acting in all distant places, by virtue of the divine omnipresence?

Answer II. I might give a second answer to this objection, in this manner: It is granted by all trinitarians, that there are some places of Scripture where the Spirit must be construed as a power, or a divine influence, and must signify the gifts, graces, or operations of the Spirit, *viz.* Where the Spirit is represented as poured out, as shed down, as communicated in greater or less degrees, &c. Now since the Spirit, if he be a proper, real, literal person, yet is confessed to be sometimes represented as a power, why may he not be sometimes represented as a person; though in his own nature he be a proper, real, literal power? Things are represented in Scripture as persons, more frequently than persons are represented as things.

Objection. But here it will be objected still, If the Spirit of God be but one power of the divine nature, how can it be described as vested with all manner of intelligent characters, powers, and properties, such as understanding, will, affections, &c.? The Spirit has knowledge, for "he searches the deep things of God," 1 *Cor.* ii. 10. He has

will, for " he distributes gifts to every man severally as he will," 1 *Cor.* xii. 11. He has affections, for " he is grieved," *Ephes.* iv. 30. This seems to represent the Spirit as a complete person, and not as one power.

Answer I. To this I reply: First, I have already acknowledged that in some places of Scripture " the Spirit of God" signifies God acting by his Spirit: So that the divine essence is included in the term, together with his almighty efficient power; and this gives a solution to that difficulty in several texts of Scripture: God, considered as acting by his Spirit, has also all other divine powers belonging to him.

Answer II. But, in the next place, I add also, that wheresoever things are represented in a personal manner, or as persons, there all personal or intelligent characters, *viz.* understanding, will, affections, &c. are ascribed to them. Even human wisdom, as well as divine, in the book of *Proverbs*, has various intelligent and voluntary characters and actions ascribed unto it, when it is personalised. The same may be said of charity, 1 *Cor.* xiii. 4—8: It has knowledge and thoughts; " charity thinketh no evil, charity believeth all things." It has a will and design; " charity seeketh not her own." It has affections; " charity is kind, it rejoiceth not at iniquity, but it rejoiceth in the truth." That this sort of language is common among the Jews, may be seen abundantly in the apocryphal books of *Wisdom* and *Ecclesiasticus*, where all manner of powers, strength, knowledge, will, motion, &c. are ascribed to wisdom. Even inanimate things, when represented personally, have knowledge, will, and affections, ascribed to them. The sun is said to have knowledge, for he *knoweth his going down*, Psalm civ. 19; the sun has affections, for he " rejoiceth to run his race," Psalm xix. 5. The wind itself, to which the Holy Spirit is compared, *John* iii. 8, has a will ascribed to it: *The wind bloweth where it listeth*, ὅπου θέλει, " where it will." By all these instances, and many others which might be added, it appears that though the blessed Spirit may have both understanding, and will, and affections, attributed to it in scripture language, it may still be one divine power, and not a proper literal person, or a distinct conscious mind.

But I have said many other things toward the solution of this difficulty in the Discourse about *The Use of the Word Person*, and in another that treats of *The Distinctions in the divine Nature*,* and I shall add something further on this head in the end of this discourse, by giving several specimens how even those Scriptures may be interpreted upon this foot, which represent the Spirit of God in the strongest language of personality.

Objection II. If the Spirit of God be really but a power of the divine nature, how is that consistent with those texts of Scripture which speak of the power of the Spirit of God, and the power of the Holy Ghost? *Rom.* xv. 13, 19. Can there be the power of a power? Or, is this proper language?

Answer I. Yes, the language is proper enough, while we remember that the word *power* in one place signifies a faculty, in the other, the force of that faculty: Are not reason and conscience powers of a human soul, and yet it is never thought improper to speak of the power, that is, force of these powers or faculties. May we not say, that one man subdued his appetites by the power of his reason? And that the conscience of another man had power over his vices? Even the divine will is represented in Scripture

* See Dissertations VI. VII.

as a power in the godhead, and yet it is very proper to attribute various effects to the power of the divine will: And by the same reason we may speak of operations wrought by the power of the Holy Spirit, especially when he is represented as a divine power.

It is natural and easy in this case to suppose the word *power*, in those texts, to be an attribute or property of this divine power or faculty, personalised: For when any thing is represented as a person, it is no impropriety at all to attribute powers to it.

Answer II. Or, if we should suppose the power of the Holy Spirit to be a pleonastic expression, it is no more than is common in Scripture, and there are many instances of it; as, Ephes. i. 5, *According to the good pleasure of his will;* that is, "the will of his will;" so in Ephes. vi. 10, *Be strong—in the power of his might.* Chap. i. 19, Καὶ τὴν ἐνέργειαν τῆ κράτες τῆς ἰσχύος αὐτῆ ἣν ἐνήργησεν: "according to the working of the might of his power, which he worked, or wrought." Col. i. 22, *In the body of his flesh.* And a multitude of such oriental pleonasms are found in Scripture.

Objection III. If the Spirit of God be properly a power of the divine nature, or a distinct principle of action, and not a real and proper person, or distinct intelligent being, how can we offer a doxology to the Spirit, and ascribe honour and glory to him, together with the Father and the Son?

Answer I. Though I think it may be very proper, upon some occasions, to join the Holy Spirit in a doxology, and to offer glory and praise to him, together with the Father and the Son, yet I think it may be affirmed, that there is not any one plain and express instance in all the Scripture, of a doxology directly and distinctly addressed to the Holy Spirit. Perhaps one reason, among others, may be because both the Father and the Son, considered as God-man, are proper distinct persons, while the proper, distinct, and real character of the Spirit, is that of a divine power, or principle of action, and it is only personalised by idioms of speech.

Now though there may be two or three examples of such a doxology in the writers of the three first centuries, and though it may be properly practised in many cases, yet if there be neither precept nor pattern for it in Scripture, it ought not to be esteemed so constant and so necessary a part of worship as modern ages have made it, and as I once thought it to be. For it is the Scripture which alone could reveal the Father, Son, and Spirit to us, and it is that must be the rule and ground of the particular worship we pay to each of the sacred Three. See a larger discourse on this subject in my *Christian Doctrine of the Trinity*, Proposition XX. Question 2.*

Answer II. Since I believe the Spirit of God to be co-eternal with God, and essential and necessary to his very being, and in that sense true God, and since he is represented in Scripture in a personal manner, or under the character of a distinct person, therefore forms of praise may be lawfully addressed to him, as well as peculiar blessings may be said to descend from him. Though the Scripture has not taught us distinctly to offer praise and honour to the Holy Spirit, yet it has taught us to hearken to the voice of the Spirit, to obey the Spirit, to hope and wait for the enlightening, the sanctifying, and the comforting influences of the Spirit, and not to resist him; and since the Holy Spirit is true God, I think it follows by evident consequence, that we may offer him the sacrifice of praise for the blessings which he bestows. There is no

* See page 349, in this Volume.

more necessity that he should be a real, proper, distinct person, or another conscious mind, in order to receive such addresses, than in order to bestow such blessings. A figurative personality is sufficient for both.

Answer III. I add yet further, that if the Holy Spirit had never been represented in a personal manner in Scripture, yet a distinct power of the divine nature may surely be as proper an object of doxology, as a divine attribute or perfection, which does not seem to carry in the idea of it so great a distinction as a divine power. I think there is no impropriety in ascribing praise and glory to the wisdom, or the grace of God. May we not properly use such language as this, "We give thanks to the grace of God? Let us give praise to the almighty power of God? Glory be given to God and his mercy? Let God the Father, and his eternal wisdom, and his love, be glorified for ever?" Now if these expressions may be sometimes used on particular occasions, with propriety and devotion, though we are not necessarily bound to use them,* I see no reason why we may not, upon particular occasions, ascribe glory to God the Father, to his eternal Word, and his almighty Spirit, even though the Word, together with the Spirit, considered purely in their divine nature, may be really distinct principles of action in the godhead, and not real, proper, distinct beings.

It may be still further argued: Suppose the powers, or even the attributes or agencies of God, were expressed in yet more metaphorical language, yet they might lawfully be doxologised. May we not say, "Glory be to God and his victorious arm?" Or "to his watchful eye?" Or, may we not ascribe "glory to the Father and the Son, and their counsels of mercy," and such like? Surely then the blessed Spirit, whatsoever be his philosophical character or idea in the godhead, may receive ascriptions of glory with as much propriety.

But if all these considerations were not sufficient to make us allow of doxologies to the Holy Spirit, I say, in the last place,

Answer IV. As in some Scriptures the Spirit of God seems to include in it the whole idea of godhead, acting by the blessed Spirit, why may we not ascribe glory to the blessed Spirit under this idea? May we not say, "Glory be given to God who sanctifies and comforts us by his blessed Spirit;" as well as, "Glory to him who sustains the supreme dignity of godhead under the idea of a father?" Perhaps if this sense be put upon the words, it may please some persons better, who are sincere and zealous believers of the doctrine of the Trinity, according to the common orthodox explication: For this idea of the Spirit approaches nearer to the orthodox scheme, wherein the whole divine essence is included in each person, together with a distinct modality of that essence which is called the personality.

Upon any of these principles which I have mentioned, there is sufficient ground for a doxolgoy to be given to the blessed Spirit, without supposing him to be a distinct intelligent being, or another mind.

Objection IV. If the Spirit of God be properly a power, or principle of agency, in

* I might here take occasion to give a full answer to that objection which has been raised by some trinitarians and unitarians, against my proposal of occasional doxologies to the Holy Spirit, as prudence and expedience may require. See *Christian Doctrine of the Trinity*, page 353. We are not necessarily bound to doxologise the divine attributes of grace, goodness, or wisdom, explicitly and distinctly; and yet prudence and expedience may sometimes direct it. The same may be justly said concerning any explicit doxologies to the Holy Spirit, which is a power of the godhead.

the divine nature, how can it be said, according to the common doctrine of divines, that he proceeds from the Father and the Son?

Answer I. It was proper in the objection to name the common doctrine of divines, and not the doctrine of Scripture, for the text from which this is derived, *John* xv. 26, only saith, " that the Spirit cometh forth, or proceedeth from the Father, and that he is sent by the Son." But the Scripture never says, that the Spirit, as to his nature, proceeds from the Son; no, nor properly from the Father, as to his nature, though his mission is originally from the Father; and perhaps, it is in this sense that he is described in Scripture as proceeding from the Father, because he is the divine efficient power of the Father, which is employed in all divine operations.

The notion of the Spirit's procession, or derivation, as to his essence and personality, both from the Father and the Son, how current soever it has been, is not a plain and express scriptural doctrine, but a human inference drawn from this doubtful argument, *viz.* " That if the Spirit be sent by the Son as to his commission in the economy, he must proceed from the Son as to his nature, existence, or personality." But this argument, if thoroughly examined, has no great force in it. The Greek churches were not influenced by it, for in elder and later days they have supposed the Spirit to proceed from the Father only, though they confess he is sent by the Son, as well as by the Father; and this seems to come nearer to the plain and express language of Scripture.

The common explication of the eternal generation of the Son, and eternal procession of the Spirit from the Father and Son, which was authorised in the Latin churches, was derived down to us from the popish schoolmen; though it is now become a part of the established, or orthodox faith, in most of the protestant nations, because at the reformation they knew no better way to explain the doctrine of the sacred Trinity. They contented themselves to say, it was incomprehensible, and thus forbid all further inquiries. But this scholastic popish explication of the manner of the derivation of the Son and Spirit from the Father, is, perhaps, the most inconceivable and indefensible part of all the common scheme of the Trinity which is called orthodox. I heartily agree to several other parts of it, *viz.* " That God is one infinite and eternal spirit, or conscious being. That the divine essence is but one and the same, though distinguished into three sacred persons. That the Word and the Spirit are so distinct from the Father, and from each other in the godhead, as to lay a just foundation for them to be represented as three persons." But their account of the generation and the procession, that is, of the manner of the derivation of the Word and Spirit from the Father, seems to me, at present, to be a set of words, of which I can attain no ideas, invented by subtle and metaphysical schoolmen, to guard and fence, as far as possible, against the charge of inconsistency, and was never designed to convey a clear conception to the mind of Christians. Let us take a short survey what this scholastic notion is.

The most approved writers represent it thus; " that the generation of the Son is the Father's communication of his own self-same, individual, self-existent essence to the Son, together with the personal property of being begotten, in and by which property he differs from the Father."

And, " that the procession of the Spirit is a communication of the self-same, individual, self-existent essence, both from the Father and the Son, unto the Spirit, together with

the personal property of spiration or proceeding, by which property he differs from the Father and the Son."

How strange soever this language appears to persons, who seek for ideas together with words, I seriously profess this is the justest, truest, and, I think, the plainest description that I can give of this opinion. If it be possible to make it plainer, I will repeat the same in another form of words.

The scholastic scheme supposes the eternal generation of the Son to be a sort of repetition of the self-same numerical divine essence of the Father, together with some new personal property, called filiation, which, joined to the divine essence, makes up the person of the Son: And that this repetition, or reproduction of the same divine essence, with its new personality, is owing to the Father only.

It also supposes the procession of the Holy Spirit to be another sort of repetition of the self-same numerical divine essence of the Father, together with some new personal property, called procession, which joined to the divine essence, makes up the person of the Holy Spirit: And that this repetition, or reproduction of the same divine essence with its new personality, is owing both to the Father and the Son conjointly; or as some rather say, it is from the Father as the original principle, by the Son as a medium.

There have been some writers, indeed, who thought it was not proper to say of the divine essence itself, that it did generate, or could be generated or derived; and therefore they supposed only the personality of the Son to be generated, or derived from the Father, and the personality of the Spirit to proceed or be derived from the Father and the Son. But when you inquire what these personalities are, they can only tell you, that it is filiation or sonship, and spiration or procession. Upon the whole therefore, according to this opinion, it is sonship is generated, and procession proceeds. But the generality of the scholastic, or orthodox trinitarians go into the former sentiments, of the generation and procession of the divine essence itself, together with the distinct personalities.

With a solemn and unfeigned veneration I reverence the names and memories of those excellent men, those learned and pious authors of the last age, who asserted and defended these opinions. Nor do I think the devotion, and zeal, and piety, of our present times, equal to theirs. But when I inquire of my own heart whether ever I could form any ideas of all this sort of language, while I was taught it in my younger days, and firmly assented to these sounds, I must honestly confess, I could not. Sometimes I was ready to inquire further; but then I satisfied all my inquisitive thoughts with this general notion, that it was incomprehensible. I found it sufficiently evident in Scripture, that the Father was God, that the Son was God, and the Holy Spirit was God; and that they were usually represented in Scripture as three persons: And though I had no distinct idea of the *modus* of it, yet I thought myself sufficiently defended, and intrenched in the forms of scholastic language, and armed with that set of phrases which make up this part of the common, or orthodox explication, without being too solicitous about conceiving that which was asserted to be utterly inconceivable.

I humbly adore the sacred Three, the Father, the Word, and the Spirit, as one God, inconceivably glorious, beyond and above all the thoughts and reasonings of men: And

therefore I would not willingly indulge an unreasonable and ambitious curiosity, in any of the mysterious things of God. Yet where, after my laborious inquiry, and daily prayer, I think I have discovered some mistake in my former opinions, not as to the doctrine itself, but as to the mode of explaining it, I humbly hope I may be permitted to part with a set of phrases which Scripture never uses, which the popish schools composed, and which I never could understand, without the censure of heresy, or departing from the faith.

Let it be observed here, that the ancient athanasian explication of the sacred doctrine of the Trinity, is a very different thing from this scholastic scheme, as I have manifested elsewhere. And though in the last century there were but few trinitarians who knew and believed the ancient anthanasian doctrine, because they generally went into the scholastic hypothesis, yet in the present age this scholastic explication, of the generation and procession of the Son and Spirit, derived from the popish schools, is supposed to be indefensible, even by some of the most learned and zealous defenders of the deity of the sacred Three.

But to return to the objection. If it were needful to maintain the eternal generation of the Son in his divine nature, and the eternal procession of the Spirit, in a way of derivation from the Father, there is scarce any scheme of explication that might be construed into a more rational and intelligible idea of it, than the hypothesis which I now propose: For if we suppose the eternal Word, and the eternal Spirit, to be two essential powers of the divine nature, they may be said to flow, at least in a logical sense, from the very essence of God the Father, as I have described in other parts of these dissertations.

And as for that text on which this objection is founded, John xv. 26, *The Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, whom I will send unto you;* see a particular paraphrase of it, at the end of this Discourse.

Objection V. You have described the Spirit of God under various ideas; you make it to signify either a divine power, or God himself acting by his Spirit, or the agency and operation of this divine power, or the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit; thus, according to your account, there is not one single, settled, uniform idea, that belongs to this sacred name, the Spirit of God, or Holy Spirit, in Scripture.

Answer. This is freely granted: And it is the eastern custom, and particularly the jewish manner of writing, to use the same word in various senses. This sort of writing runs through the Scripture, both in the Old and New Testament. Shall I instance in the word *law?* Sometimes it signifies the five books of Moses, sometimes the ten commandments, sometimes a doctrine of religion, sometimes the gospel, and sometimes it denotes a principle of sin, or a principle of holiness. The word *grace* also, in one place, signifies the favour of God, in another a christian virtue, and in a third text it denotes beauty or decency; and the Greek word χάρις signifies also *thanks.* The word *faith* sometimes means an act of the mind, believing the revelation of Christ, and sometimes the object of that act, that is, the truth, or the gospel. And many other words might be produced of the same kind, such as *righteousness, flesh, body, soul,* &c.

But let me come nearer the point, and give an instance of the name of the second person in the Trinity, that is, *the Logos,* or *Word;* sometimes it signifies a power of the divine nature: Psalm xxxiii. 6, and 2 Peter iii. 5, *By the Word of God the heavens were of old.* Sometimes it denotes God himself acting by his Word:

Heb. iv. 12, *The word of God is quick*, or living, *and powerful—a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.* Sometimes it intends the complete person of our Lord Jesus Christ incarnate: Rev. xix. 13, *His name is called The Word of God.* And at other times it means the word of God, either written or spoken; as Prov. xxx. 5, *Every word of God is pure.* And in a multitude of other texts it has the same sense.

It is plain that the sacred writers had different ideas under the same word in different places, and if we should confine the terms *faith, grace, law, righteousness, word,* to one uniform sense and idea, it would be impossible to explain or interpret many texts of Scripture.

Now, since many other words are used in this manner in Scripture, and even that sacred name, *the Word of God,* which denotes the second person of the blessed Three, why may not the name *Spirit,* which denotes the third person, be construed with the same latitude?

Let it be observed here, that it is not the custom of the sacred penmen to write according to learned rules and forms of logic, nor to confine the same term always to the same idea. They generally choose a more lax and vulgar way of speaking; they use the same word in several senses, and apply the same term not only to the original and chief idea, but to various things which are causes, effects, parts, properties, or adjuncts of that original idea: Which modes of speech, though they are very common and familiar, yet the critics afterwards invented learned names for them, *viz.* metaphor, metonymy, synechdoche, &c.

I add further, that the most orthodox writers on this subject have found it necessary to construe the term *Holy Spirit* in some variety of ideas: For they make it signify his influences, or his gifts, or his effusion on men, in such places where they thought it could never be applied to his person. The learned Mr. Pool, author of the *Synopsis Criticorum,* in his excellent little treatise of *The Deity of the Holy Spirit,* affirms, that it must needs be taken so in many places of Scripture; page 64, 65, he cites several of them. And that learned author, J. H. Bisterfield, in his *Answer to Crellius,* about fourscore years ago, and all writers besides of the orthodox sentiments, confess the necessity of applying different senses to the term *Holy Spirit,* and that it must sometimes denote the effusion or influences thereof: As in John vii. 39, *The Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified.* The learned know, that the word *given,* is not in the Greek original, but they all explain it by " the gift of the Spirit" in their translation. And so in Acts xix. 2, *We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost;* which most expositors interpret merely concerning the plentiful effusion of the Spirit at Pentecost. And in other places, where the Holy Ghost is said to be given " by the laying on of the hands of the apostles," as *Acts* viii. 18, it seems necessary to interpret it concerning his gifts, lest it appear too assuming to suppose a sacred person in the eternal godhead to be given to one man by the hands of another.

SECTION V.

AN EXPLICATION OF VARIOUS TEXTS ACCORDING TO THIS ACCOUNT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

THE several texts already cited, and interpreted in the former parts of this discourse, shew how necessary it is to understand this term, *the Holy Spirit,* with such a latitude, and in this variety of ideas. Here I shall add a few more Scriptures, and those even of

the greatest difficulty, and of the most considerable importance, to make it appear, that this discourse of the Holy Spirit is adapted to explain the several descriptions that are given of him in the Scripture. The rest will easily fall in with it.

I. One of the most remarkable and important texts, wherein the Holy Spirit is represented as a person distinct from the Father and the Son, is in John xvi. 13, 14, *When the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth; for he shall not speak of himself, but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak, and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me; for he shall receive of mine, and shew it unto you.* Here let it be noted, that the Holy Spirit, who inspired the prophets, and revealed the mind of God under the jewish dispensation, was now appointed more explicitly to perform this work, in a more evident and conspicuous appearance than before, and a more plentiful and magnificent manner; and to empower multitudes to preach, prophesy, and work miracles in the name of Christ. Now as the Father did not design, under the gospel, to manifest his will by the appearance of angels, so much as in ancient times, and was about to recal the person of his Son from this lower world, this blessed Spirit, or the divine efficient power, was to reside in the church as the deputy, or resident, and prime minister, both of the Father and the Son. Upon these accounts it seemed proper to our Saviour, who is the divine wisdom incarnate, to describe this divine power by a strong prosopopœia, and a noble allegory, as a messenger sent forth from God for this glorious design: And because the extraordinary effusions of the Holy Ghost were not to be made till Christ was ascended to heaven, to dispatch this messenger to the earth, and to send him on this great errand, therefore saith our Lord, "Except I go, the Comforter will not come," *verse* 7.

Now, when a messenger delivers what his principal gives him in charge, he is then justly declared a true and faithful messenger: But when he devises things of his own head, and delivers them in the name of his principal, he is then said to speak of himself, and then he loses the character of truth or veracity. It is in this sense Christ, who was the messenger of the Father, says, *The words that I speak unto you, I speak not of myself*, John xiv. 10; that is, "I did not invent this doctrine; it is no new contrivance of mine; but I delivered to you what my Father gave me in charge." And according to this allegory, when Christ says of the Spirit, under the representation of God's messenger, that *he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak;* the meaning may be two-fold: 1. That he should not teach any new doctrine, different from the doctrine of Christ. 2. That he should not act like a false messenger, and impose upon them; but he should deliver to them the doctrines of Christ as one entrusted and sent by the Father and the Son. And in this sense he justly deserves the character of *the Spirit of truth*, as well as because divine veracity belongs to his nature as God, who is the God of truth.

Perhaps this explication of this text may seem a little too unnatural and figurative to some persons, who are truly zealous for the deity of the Holy Spirit: But let them consider, that every interpreter of this Scripture, who preserves the doctrine of his deity, is constrained to nearly as figurative a sense as this is. And whatsoever subordinations are ascribed to a supposed real proper divine person, may be better ascribed to a divine power, under the subordinate character of a messenger in the divine economy. It is none but the arians who can keep precisely to the letter of the text here, because they make the Spirit an inferior or created being.

II. Another remarkable text is, John xv. 26, *But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me:* Which may be explained thus, "the Spirit may be said to proceed from the Father, because God, in the person of the Father, is considered as exhibiting the prime physical idea or essence of godhead, and thus may be conceived as the original of the two divine powers, *viz.* the Word and the Spirit: Thus the Word and the Spirit may be said to proceed from the Father, as powers from the essence."

Again, God the Father is considered as sustaining the prime moral idea or dignity of godhead, and thus has the original right and power of sending the Spirit, of bestowing the gifts and graces of his own Spirit, or of conferring gifts and graces by his own Spirit, and in this sense also the Spirit is said to proceed from the Father; the Father is the original agent, and sustains the supreme character in the divine economy, and as such he is called the Father.

Sometimes God condescends to confer these gifts by the ministration of the apostles, and by imposition of their hands. Many persons received the Holy Ghost by the hands of the apostles, as instruments, when in reality it was God communicated those sacred gifts, even as miracles were said to be wrought by men, when in reality the Spirit of God performed them. Sometimes Jesus Christ is said to send the Spirit from heaven, but then Christ is not only considered as the most glorious vicegerent, or minister of God, by whose mediation and ministration divine influences descend on the disciples from the Father; but he is considered also as one in whom the fulness of the godhead dwells bodily, as one who is God in human nature, as the eternal word or wisdom of the Father dwelling in flesh. Now in this respect the Spirit may be properly called the Spirit of Christ, and is said to be given, sent, and shed forth by Jesus Christ, in a superior character of grandeur and authority, than is, or can ever be, expressed concerning any of his apostles.

When divine wisdom is represented in a personal manner, as in *Prov.* i. 20, 23, it is frequently supposed to denote our blessed Saviour. Now wisdom speaks there in a majestic manner, *Turn you at my reproof; behold, I will pour out my Spirit unto you;* and when our Lord was departing from the world, he breathed on the disciples, and said, *Receive ye the Holy Ghost,* John xx. 22.

The Son of God, or the man Christ Jesus, personally united to the eternal *logos,* or divine Word, is *God over all, blessed for ever:* And being now ascended to heaven, he sustains the office of his Father's vicegerent, and deputed king in the sacred economy; and therefore the Spirit is represented as proceeding from the Father in an original manner, but as being sent by Jesus Christ; the authority of the Father and the Son concur in this matter. The Lamb is raised to sit upon the Father's throne, that is, to exercise his Father's authority, *Rev.* iii. 21; and therefore the river of the water of life, which may denote the blessed Spirit, is represented, *Rev.* xxii. 1, to "proceed from the throne both of God and the Lamb;" that is, from the royal authority of the Father and the Son.

III. Text. 1 Cor. xii. 4, *Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.* Verse 5, *And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord.* Verse 6, *And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.* Which is easily explained thus: "Though the gifts are different, it is the same divine Spirit, the same principle of efficience, or power of God, that gives them. Though the administrations,

or services in the church are various, yet Christ is the same Lord and master. Though there are divers miraculous operations, yet it is the same God which worketh them all in all believers who receive them." Now, that the same Spirit in the fourth verse signifies a power in the divine nature, or God himself operating by this power, may be learned from *verse* 11, compared with *verse* 6, *But all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.* Both the will and the operation which are proper to God himself, and which are ascribed to him, *verse* 6, are ascribed to the Spirit, *verse* 11; whereby it seems plain that the Spirit is sometimes construed to signify God himself, and sometimes to signify a power in the divine nature. Thus the Scripture attributes true godhead to the Spirit, under some distinction both from the Father and the Son.

IV. Text. Isaiah xliv. 3, *I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground. I will pour out my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring.* And Joel ii. 28, *I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh.* Acts ii. 33, *Christ having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear.* In these, and many other Scriptures, it is evident that the Spirit of God is represented under the character or metaphor of water, which is more plainly expressed, John vii. 38, 39, *He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water: But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive; for the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified.* Now, if *the Spirit of God,* in these texts, be explained to signify his influences, his operations, his gifts and graces, which are distributed and dispersed abroad like streams of living water in the church, and poured down or conferred on men, perhaps this may come nearest to the sense and idea of the sacred writers: And, as I hinted before, if we compare those Scriptures herewith, wherein the Spirit of God is said to be given by the laying on of the hands of men, such as *Acts* viii. 18, it will further confirm the explication of the term *Spirit* by gifts and influences.

V. The last text I shall mention, is that famous and contested place, 1 John v. 7, 8, *There are three that bear witness in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these Three are One: And there are three that bear witness on earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood; and these three agree in one.*

Now the three witnesses in heaven, in the seventh verse, may be well interpreted, God the Father with his two divine powers, the Word and the Spirit, which in this place, as well as in many others, are represented personally, for they are called τρεῖς μαρτυροῦντες, that is, *three witnesses,* or three persons bearing witness: And perhaps there may be some special congruity in representing them as three persons in this place, because they succeed each other, and chiefly witnessed in different successive economies or administrations, *viz.* the Father eminently under the Old Testament bearing witness to the gospel by prophecy; the Word eminently in his incarnate state by his own ministrations; and the Spirit eminently after the ascension of Christ by his extraordinary and divine operations: And yet these three are one, ἓν εἰσι, are one thing, one being, one deity, not considered in a personal manner, but as a nature or essence.

In the eighth verse, *There are three that bear witness on earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood.* These are represented also as three persons, for they are called τρεῖς μαρτυροῦντες. The best expositions that are given of them are these two:

1. They may be all considered as belonging to Christ himself, and then the water signifies the pure and holy doctrine and life of Christ. And the blood denotes the sealing his doctrine by his own death and martyrdom; and there is this reason why these witnesses belong to our Lord himself, *viz.* because it is said, *verse* 6, he came *not by water only, but by water and blood.* And then it is, "the Spirit who beareth the third witness;" that is, the glorious power of miraculous operations which attended our Saviour's preaching. Or,

2. They may be all considered as belonging to Christianity, or exhibited among Christians: And then the blood signifies the blood or atonement of Christ; exhibited, perhaps, in the Lord's-supper, which witnesseth to the truth of the gospel by its power to speak peace to the guilty conscience: The water represents the grace of regeneration; held forth, perhaps, in the baptismal water, which by changing sinners into saints, witnesses to the truth of the gospel: And the Spirit most probably signifies the miraculous gifts of the Spirit, and the apostles and primitive Christians, which join to confirm the same gospel.

I think it most proper to refer the term *spirit*, among the witnesses on earth, to the miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost, because the term *spirit*, considered as a distinct power in the divine nature itself, is described as a witness in heaven.

Thus I have endeavoured to explain the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, and to apply this explication to the most difficult texts of Scripture. Upon the whole, I conclude, that since the Scripture represents him under the characters of true godhead, and under the character of a person distinct from the Father and the Son, since also it is exceeding hard to reconcile strict and proper deity with three strict and proper personalities in the godhead itself, in a fair consistence with reason and Scripture, it seems to be most agreeable to the word of God, that we should explain the personality of the Spirit in a figurative sense, that we may better maintain his proper eternal deity, and his unity with the Father. This seems to be much more eligible than that we should explain his personality in a strict literal sense, for this would lead us into one of these two dangers, *viz.* either to make three distinct consciousnesses, or intelligent minds, in the one true and eternal God, or to sink the character of the Holy Spirit into a creature, that we might save the proper personality.

I grant, when we have been accustomed all our lives to a particular set of words and ideas, it is pretty hard to persuade ourselves to make any little change in our ideas or words, even though the greatest advantages might be attained by it toward the defence of the gospel, and though it might remove some of the chief embarrassments which attend any particular article of faith. I wish heartily for myself and my friends, greater freedom of soul in the humble pursuit of truth. Yet I think I have not much varied from the defensible parts of the common explication of the Trinity; and I have taken care religiously to secure all the foundations of divine worship, which concern the honour of the Holy Spirit, and all our practical regards to him which concern our salvation.

I impose my thoughts on no man; and if there be any thing found in all this discourse which may endanger any necessary part of our christian belief; or which may diminish any thing of the divine honour which is due to the blessed Spirit, our sanctifier and comforter; I disclaim and renounce it utterly, and would be glad to

receive a better explication, which might be more secure from any such danger and inconvenience.

It is an easy matter for persons of wit and subtlety, and critical artifice, to embarrass the clearest explication of such sublime doctrines. It is easy to raise up a dust of confusion around the incomprehensible things of God, which have some darkness and difficulty in them when set in the fairest light. I wish every disputant of this sacred article, of the Trinity in Unity, would set it in a better view, and represent it in more easy and distinct ideas, rather than studiously batter down every scheme without building up any.

While we are tracing out these abstruse and awful subjects by the light of Scripture, in this dark world, I am sure it becomes us all to keep our spirits in a modest and humble frame, and in a constant dependence on the divine aids of that blessed Spirit, which searcheth the deep things of God, and reveals them to men. As in my feeble pursuit of these inquiries I have always laid myself at the foot of this heavenly Teacher, that according to the promise of our departing Saviour, I might be guided by him into all truth, so I would now humbly recommend these papers to him, that if there be any thing in them proper to lead Christians into clearer conceptions of his own sacred nature and operations, he would condescend to make them happily successful for that purpose: And beseeching my Saviour, that whatsoever sentiments of mine are inconsistent with divine truth, he would graciously forgive and cancel them, and never suffer any thing that I have written to have so unhappy an influence, as to lead the meanest professor of Christianity into a mistake, in matters of so glorious concernment.

However, since there is some difficulty and darkness attends our inquiries into the metaphysical nature and essence of the blessed Spirit, his unity with, and distinction from the Father and Son, and since he has not condescended to reveal this mystery to us in his word in evident and express language, we may be well assured, that he has not made our participation of his divine and salutary influences to depend upon any clear, explicit, and certain knowledge thereof. Many a humble Christian has been richly endowed with his gifts and graces, who had obtained but very imperfect and confused ideas of his abstracted nature. He has taught the holy penman to write down his sacred titles and offices, as an enlightener, a sanctifier, and a comforter, in more plain and express language, than his sublime essence, and metaphysical idea or nature. And while we depend on his divine all-sufficiency for these purposes, and seek to God the Father, and his Son Christ Jesus, for the communications of his blessed Spirit, we have a divine promise that we shall not seek in vain. "If men, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to their children, how much more shall our heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" *Luke* xi. 13. And this is the spring of our light, and our hope, on this depends our present holiness and our eternal comfort. *Amen.*

DISSERTATION VI.

OF THE USE OF THE WORD "PERSON" IN THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY.

SINCE the word *person* has been used in most ages of the christian church, in setting forth the doctrine of the blessed Trinity, and hath been applied to those three sacred ideas, the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, it becomes almost necessary, when we write on this subject, to declare the sense of this word, as it is variously applied in discoursing on this doctrine.

The sense of the word *person*, in the common language of men, is one single, intelligent, voluntary agent, or a principle of action that has understanding and will; so three men, or three angels, are properly called three distinct persons. Now since it has pleased God in his word, to represent to us the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, under the character of three such intelligent agents, they may be called in human language three persons, according to this scriptural representation.

The distinctive character of a person is the application of the personal pronouns *I*, *thou*, *he*, to any thing; and wheresoever these are applied to any being, either simple or compound, that being is there exhibited in a personal manner, and may in that respect be called a person. Now, all the three pronouns, *I*, *thou*, and *he*, being frequently applied in Scripture to the Father and the Son, and the pronoun *he* to the blessed Spirit, we therefore call them three persons.

I confess, I know of but two particular places in Scripture, where this word *person* is ever supposed to be used with reference to this doctrine.

One is in *Heb.* i. 3, where Christ is called "the express image of his Father's person:" And though the Greek word *hypostasis* sometimes signifies *substance*, as it is translated *Heb.* xi. 1; yet in this place it seems to intimate such a distinction of the Father from the Son, as is strong enough to answer the word *person*.

The next place is 2 *Cor.* iv. 6, "the glory of God shines forth in the face, or person, of Jesus Christ;" for the Greek word πρόσωπον signifies also *person*. In the first of these texts, *person* is applied to God the Father, and in the second to Christ incarnate: Though it must also be confessed, that the critics in the learned languages will hardly allow either of these words, *hypostasis*, or *prosopon*, among the ancient Greeks, to signify properly a person in the sense in which it is used in this controversy.*

I confess, I am not aware of any text, where any term that expressly signifies *person* is applied to the Holy Spirit, or to the divine nature of Christ, considered apart from

* Πρόσωπον is supposed to signify a person, 2 *Cor.* i. 11, "The gift bestowed on us by the prayers of many persons;" and I think this is the only text where it necessarily signifies a distinct intelligent agent, and this does not refer to any of the sacred Three, but to men only. As for ὑπόστασις, some critics say, it must rather signify *substance*, in *Heb.* i. 3, because in the apostolic age they think it was never used to express *person*.

the man Jesus; yet since the sacred Three have such sort of distinct actions and characters attributed to them in Scripture, as we usually ascribe to three distinct intelligent agents, we make no scruple to call them all persons, and think there is sufficient foundation for it in Scripture.

Yet let it be noted, that though the word *person* may be fitly used, and applied to the doctrine of the Trinity, we are not to imagine that it should be always taken here exactly in the same sense, and include precisely the same ideas, as when we call three men, or three angels, three distinct persons. This I gave notice of in my *Christian Doctrine of the Trinity*, pages 325—333.

In almost all arts and sciences it has been ever accounted a very lawful and practicable thing to borrow several terms from familiar language and common speech, and to use them in a sense peculiar to some one art or science, though it be different from their vulgar and more usual signification. We may borrow a plain example from every mechanic trade; as for instance, a watch-maker talks of a balance, a pinion, a hand, a spring, a barrel, a key, &c. and affixes ideas to those words very different from their original or common meaning. So when a metaphysician speaks of simplicity, passion, substance, subject, a patient, matter, form, &c. he gives those words a different meaning from what they have in common life. And why shall it not be lawful in theology, while we are treating of sacred and divine subjects, which are so much superior to our common ideas, to borrow the word *person* from familiar and common language, and use it in a sense that has some analogy to the common meaning of it, though it be not entirely the same?

In explaining this article of the Trinity, it is well known that there are two special cases wherein we make use of the word *person;* and both of them may require such a sense of the word as is a little different from the common usage; for human languages have not furnished us with words sufficiently distinct and apposite to express divine ideas; and therefore men have borrowed those words from common speech, which, in their opinion, come near to those divine ideas which they would express. The two cases are these:

The first is, when we apply the word *person* to three distinctions in the divine nature, and call the Word and Spirit *persons* as well as the Father; all these being represented in Scripture as intelligent agents, or principles of action, we call them three persons.

The second case is, when we apply the word *person* to the human and divine natures of our Lord Jesus Christ united, and call this God-man, this compound or complex being, one person.

In the first case, we suppose three distinctions in one divine nature to be represented in Scripture, under three personal characters, or as three persons, who are all employed in our creation and salvation.

In the second case, we suppose two natures united into one personal character, for the Scripture represents *God manifest in the flesh* as one person, 1 *Tim.* iii. 16, He was *seen of angels*, and *received up into glory*.

The application of the word *person* to Christ as God-man, has been largely vindicated in my second *Dissertation on the Trinity*, where I have made it appear, that as any two material beings which are united together, as two houses, trees, or fruits, may be called one complex house, one complex tree, &c. So the human and divine natures of Christ, though possibly each of them may be called one single person, yet when intimately

united, may be called one complex person, or one complex principle of intelligent action and passion. I refer the reader to that Discourse. See pages 380—386.

But when we consider the distinctions in the divine nature, and call the Father, the Word, and Spirit, three persons, it requires a little further explication in what sense the characters of personal agents may be attributed to the Word and Spirit as well as to the Father, and that shall be the subject of the present Dissertation.

As in the case which concerns Christ as God-man, the word *person* has its signification enlarged to include two natures in it, which is more than common language admits; so in this case, which concerns three persons in one divine essence, the word *person* has its signification narrowed, to admit rather less into it than common language generally includes. I think these things have been generally so understood by all learned trinitarians; at least in that common explication of the Trinity which hath been called orthodox for four hundred years, wherein three distinct consciousnesses or spirits, are not supposed to make up the godhead, but one single consciousness only, or one single spirit.

Now, if the complete divine nature, or the infinite Spirit, be represented as including in it two distinct powers, which are called the Word and the Spirit, by way of analogy to the human soul, which includes in it the powers of mind and * will, and if we suppose the human soul acting by the mind and will, to represent God the Father as acting by his two divine powers, the Word and Spirit, it is evident that the Father is properly called a person, an intelligent voluntary agent, with very little or no alteration of the common sense of the word in human language; and this appellation is what all the opponents of our doctrine will allow.

But when the Word and Spirit are called *persons*, which are supposed to be really but divine powers of the Father, whose inward distinction we know not, the term *person* is then used in a figurative or metaphorical sense, and not in so proper and literal a sense as when the Father is called a person. Yet that there is sufficient distinction between them to lay a foundation for such a distinct personal representation of them in Scripture, will appear by the following considerations:

Consideration I. Are not the various faculties of man often represented under personal characters in common discourse? How frequently is a man represented as conversing with his own mind, communing with his own heart, following the dictates of his own will, or subduing his will and subjecting it to his reason? Do we not freely say, "My mind has laboured hard to find out such a difficulty: My will is resolutely bent to pursue such a course: My mind denies her assent to such a doctrine?" Or "My will resists no more, but yields itself up to the conduct of my understanding?"

How frequently are reason and fancy introduced like two opponents or disputants? Is not conscience at every turn brought in as a person speaking to the sinner, as an accuser charging him with secret crimes, or as a judge approving the actions of a good man, and condemning a rebel, and all this under a personal character, and in personal

* Though I represent the divine Word and Spirit by way of analogy to the mind and will of a human soul, let it be observed, that the chief reason why I use the words *mind* and *will*, is, because they are the two single names generally given to the two chief powers of the soul; and as the mind denotes the knowing power, so the will is commonly understood to signify the active power. But if there were any single word that did include the intelligent and volitive power, and another single word that did denote the efficient or executive power of moving the body, I would much rather choose two such names to set forth the divine Word and divine Spirit, as I have noted elsewhere, because I think this would come nearer to the scriptural representation.

language? Are not dialogues introduced oftentimes between reason and fancy, between a man and his conscience? And this not merely in studied rhetorical language, but in common discourse.

And since human powers are thus represented as persons, why may not the Word and Spirit, which are divine powers, be thus represented also? And why may not God be represented as a person, transacting his own divine affairs with his Word and his Spirit, under personal characters; since a man is represented as transacting human affairs with his understanding, mind, will, reason, fancy, or conscience, in a personal manner?

Consideration II. There is yet a further reason why we may expect such personal representations of the divine powers in Scripture: For it is the custom of eastern writers, and particularly of the penmen of the holy Scripture, to represent the several parts, principles, characters, or virtues of a man in a personal manner. So the body and the soul are called the *outward* and *inward man*, 2 Cor. iv. 16. So the principles of grace and principles of sin are represented personally, and have personal actions and characters attributed to them under the names of *flesh* and *spirit*, Gal. v. 17: These same principles are called *the old man* and *the new man*, which are personal names, *Rom.* vi. 6; *Ephes.* iv. 24. So charity is represented as a person, 1 *Cor.* xiii. And understanding, or wisdom, is frequently made a person, in the *Book of Proverbs*, even where it doth not so evidently signify the Messiah; and much more may it be exhibited as a person where Christ himself is presignified and designed.

It is so customary with eastern writers to personalise every thing, that even inanimate beings, as well as virtues and vices, are represented by them under personal characters. The sun and the wind have personal properties ascribed to them; Psalm civ. 19, *The sun knoweth his going down.* John iii. 8, *The wind bloweth where it listeth.* Here are knowledge and will attributed to mere corporeal beings.

The countries of Edom and Egypt, the cities of Tyre and Jerusalem, are called the *daughters* of Edom and Egypt, of Jerusalem and of Tyre, &c. Job *said to corruption, Thou art my father;* as well as *to the worm, Thou art my mother, and my sister,* Job xvii. 14. Sparks of fire are called "the sons of the burning coal," *Job* v. 7. And the words *son* and *daughter* are applied almost to every thing in their style, which names denote personal ideas. It is no wonder then if in Scripture the powers of the divine nature are described as persons.

Consideration III. I add further, that the Jews were wont to distinguish the powers of a spirit personally from that spirit: And this comes close and home to our present case. When they represent a man as purposing and resolving any thing in his own heart, they say he speaks to his *memra*, that is, his word, his understanding, his soul his will, or any of his powers. So the great God is oftentimes distinguished from his *memra*, or word, or will, or powers, or affections, in the same jewish writings. Thus the term *memra*, when put for God or man, is often put for himself under a distinct personal character. There are some few places wherein this very word *memra* is evidently attributed to the Messiah, or Christ who was to come. See Mr. Robert Fleming's *Christology*, Vol. I. pages 137—142, where are many citations of this kind from the jewish writings.

Philo the Jew, who wrote about the time our Saviour was upon earth, and has left his writings as one of the noblest monuments we have of the ancient jewish sentiments,

speaks frequently of distinct powers in the divine nature; and represents them in a personal manner. He acknowledges that God has two chief supreme powers, one of which is called *God*, and the other *Lord*, and supposes these two powers to be uncreated, eternal, infinite, immense, incomprehensible, and speaks of them upon very many occasions. And though he does not directly give these two powers the name of *mind* and *will*, for he calls them sometimes *dominion* and *goodness*, yet he speaks of them as divine powers, by which all things are created and governed. He makes the *logos*, or *wisdom*, another divine power, or God himself. "These things," saith he, "being considered, as it appears how God is three, and yet but one;" which in his allegorising way he represents by the vision of Abraham, when Jehovah appeared to him, Gen. xviii. 1, 2, "And Abraham looked, and behold *three men stood by him:*" This vision, in a literal sense, he expounds of the *Logos*, and two angels: By the mystical sense, he saith, here was denoted ὁ Ὤν, the great Jehovah with his two powers; and he repeats this in another place: "In the middle is the Father of all things; on each side of him are the two powers, the oldest and the nearest to the ὁ Ὤν." See Dr. Allix's *Judgment of the Jewish Church*, page 147. Thus we see there was some shadow of the Doctrine of the Trinity among the Jews of the ancient synagogue; though they were as zealous asserters of the unity of the godhead, as either the socinians or arians can pretend to be: And it appears also by this sort of discourse, that they conceived of the sacred Trinity as God with his two powers, which I have taken more notice of in another place.

Consideration IV. To make this the more evident, I add also, that most of the very primitive fathers of the christian church, when they speak of these things, describe the divine *Logos*, or eternal reason, or wisdom of God, as a personal power, or as a divine power under a personal character; and represent the *logos*, or Νοῦς, or Σοφία, that is, the *divine wisdom*, or *mind*, as a counsellor, with whom God consulted, in the formation of his works, and who was with God before all worlds, even from all eternity. And whosoever will read those early authors will find the *Logos*, or second person in the blessed Trinity, frequently so described, that every reader would imagine a proper divine power, rather than a proper literal person, to be there represented; though sometimes also they figuratively affix personal names to this *Logos*, this eternal Word, or wisdom. See the *Dissertation on the Name Logos*, page 423—465.

Consideration V. The common and usual explications of this sacred doctrine, which have been esteemed most orthodox among the protestant churches, both at home and abroad, have supposed the distinctions of the sacred Three in the divine nature not to arise to the complete, proper, and literal idea of *person* among men; because they generally make the essence of all the three to be numerically the same. Therefore it can be but a metaphorical or figurative personality which they allow; and they call them three persons, only by way of analogy to three men, or three angels, since there are not, in their opinion, three distinct conscious beings in the godhead.

The most ingenious and learned Dr. Wallis, in his *Letters on the Doctrine of the Trinity*, makes no scruple at all to say, that the word *person*, when applied to the distinctions of the Word and Spirit in the divine nature, is metaphorical, analogical and figurative: And he frequently uses this manner of speech, supposing that three literal persons would not consist with the divine unity; and yet I think, he has always been esteemed an orthodox trinitarian. "We mean no more," says he, "by the word

person, but somewhat analogous thereto; the words *person* and *personality* here are but metaphorical, and so are the words *Father*, *Son*, *generate*," &c. See his *Third Letter*, pages 31, 39. I might cite many other writers, who have been known and approved authors in this controversy in the last age, who make the distinction of divine persons to be a distinction of internal relative properties, in the self-same individual essence; which can never arise to the idea of a distinct, literal, and proper personality.

Consideration VI. To vindicate this metaphorical sense, in which the word *person* is attributed to the sacred Three, consider, that godhead, or deity, is ascribed in Scripture to the Word, and to the Spirit; and there are also personal characters ascribed to them: Now if this sacred doctrine cannot be well explained in a proper and literal sense, both with regard to the deity and to the personality, lest we run into tritheism, and make three gods: I esteem it much safer to construe the terms of personality in a figurative sense, than to construe the terms of deity in that manner, and to allow only a figurative godhead to the Word and Spirit: For the proofs of their true and proper deity seem to me stronger than the proofs of their literal and proper personality.

And, indeed, most, if not all, the common orthodox trinitarian schemes, as I said before, agree with me in this, that the word *person* is not applied to all the sacred Three in the full and literal sense of it, though the word *god* is attributed to them in the literal sense. If some have supposed a particular manner of subsistence to be a person in the godhead; and others say, a person is the divine being in a particular manner of subsistence, and that the three divine persons are the same numerical divine being repeated in three manners of subsistence; it is much the same in this respect: For every one perceives, that neither of these are three distinct persons in the literal and proper meaning of the word; therefore it is plain the word *person* is here used by them figuratively or analogically, though they use the word *god* in its proper and literal sense.

Consideration VII. If the personal characters which are attributed to Christ in Scripture are too strong, and proper, and literal, to be solved by such a figurative personality, then let it be observed, that Christ had a distinct human nature, a soul and body, in union with the divine Word; and surely this assumption of human nature strengthens the personal characters of *I*, *thou*, and *he:* This will abundantly solve the attribution of personal ideas to Christ. If the divine Word, in the sense and explication which I have given, be not sufficiently distinct from the Father, to be called a person, yet surely it may be allowed that the man Christ Jesus is a proper person, and his union to the divine Word does not abate or destroy his personality. The whole complex being, or God-man, may have a sufficient claim to personality, and all the personal pronouns, *I*, *thou*, and *he*, are properly applied to him.

And as this sufficiently solves the personal ascriptions to Christ, since his incarnation, it will solve such personal ascriptions before his incarnation also: For I think there are many reasons to believe, that the divine nature of Christ formed and assumed his human soul into union with itself before the creation: That the soul of Messiah was the first of all creatures, was personally united to the divine *Logos*, or wisdom, before the world was, and continued so through all the ancient ages of the church, often appearing as the Angel of the covenant, till at last he veiled himself in flesh and blood, and took upon him the likeness of man, which I have endeavoured to prove in another discourse.

Consideration VIII. If this scheme does not sufficiently account for the distinct expressions of the personality of the Holy Spirit, let us remember that the personal characters of the blessed Spirit are not expressed in so frequent, nor in so strong, and plain terms in Scripture as those of Christ.

1. In all the New Testament there is only the pronoun *he* attributed to the Spirit, but I think neither *I* nor *thou*, nor *we*, are applied once in all that sacred book; whereas *I*, *thou*, *he*, and *we*, are all ascribed both to the Father and Son.

2. The Holy Spirit is often described in the notion of a divine power, or influence, rather than a person. He is said to be "given to men," to be "shed forth," or "poured out" on them; the apostles are said to be "baptized with the Holy Spirit," even with this very same Spirit, who is yet in another place called *the Comforter*, and *the Spirit of truth*, and is represented in as strong language of personality as any where in the Bible, *John* xiv. 26, and xvi. 13, 14, compared with *Acts* i. 5. The believers are "anointed with the Spirit," 1 *John* ii. 27; and "filled with the Holy Spirit," in opposition to wine, *Ephes.* v. 18: And in *Acts* vi. 5, and xi. 24, they are *full of faith and of the Holy Ghost:* And in 1 John iv. 13, *He hath given us of his Spirit;* that is, a portion or measure of his Spirit: And in *Titus* iii. 6, "He shed his Spirit on us abundantly," that is, in a large measure. There is a part of the Spirit which was on Moses, that was given to the elders of Israel, *Numb.* xi. 25. So a *double portion* of the Spirit which was in Elijah rested on Elisha, 2 *Kings* ii. 10, 15. "The Spirit is not given by measure to Jesus Christ," *John* iii. 34. See more in the Fifth Dissertation, where he is represented as the "power of God." All which modes of expression seem to describe properly a divine power in greater or lesser degrees of influence, rather than a proper person; though at other times this Spirit may be represented personally in an oriental and figurative way of speaking. See pages 468—474.

3. The Holy Spirit is represented at other times, in the sense of some writers, as a complication of divine virtues, because in *Rev.* i. 4, it is called *the seven spirits which are before the throne.* And in *Rev.* v. 6, the Lamb had *seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God;* which seems to hold forth the seven-fold virtues or powers of God which dwell in Christ, that is, a perfection of divine powers to answer his economical exaltation, by the residence of the Spirit of God in him in the completest manner.

4. Let us remember also, what was before mentioned, that though there be one Scripture in the Bible, *viz. Heb.* i. 3, where the word *hypostasis*, or *person*, is attributed to the Father; and one text, *viz.* 2 *Cor.* iv. 6, where the word *prosopon*, or *person*, is applied to the Son of God incarnate; yet I can find no verse in the Bible where any word that directly signifies *person* is attributed to the Holy Spirit, and therefore the personal characters attributed to him may be supposed to be only figurative, and such as may be attributed to a divine power.

Consideration IX. If it should be granted, that the powers of a human soul, a finite being, are not substantial and distinct enough to admit such personal ascriptions as belong to the divine Word and Spirit in Scripture, yet the powers of a divine and infinite being may be substantial and distinct enough to support such ascriptions. We know little of the divine essence but by way of analogy to human souls: And as the divine nature, or God, has something in him transcendently superior to all our ideas of human

souls; so the powers of a God, which, in condescension to our weakness, are called his *Word* and his *Spirit*, may have something in them, even in this respect, so transcendently superior to the powers of a human soul, as to be more proper subjects of such personal characters and ascriptions as the holy Scripture has attributed to them; and yet their distinction or difference may not be so great as to make them distinct conscious minds.

Consideration X. I add in the last place, that if there be any expressions in Scripture, either relating to the eternal divine Word, or the Holy Spirit, which cannot be construed, or interpreted, concerning a particular power of the divine nature represented in such a figurative personality, I would then inquire, whether it may not be interpreted concerning the divine nature itself exerting that particular power? And in this sense the personality will appear more complete and more literal.

In this view of things the *Logos*, or *Word*, may signify God acting by his Word; as Heb. iv. 12, *The Word of God is* living *and powerful,—and a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.* And the Spirit of God may signify God acting by his Spirit; as when Ananias "lied to the Holy Ghost," *Acts* v. 3, 4, he lied to God acting by the Holy Ghost, God residing and operating in the apostles by his Spirit.

Now this representation of things approaches very near to the common orthodox explication of the Trinity, wherein the Son and Spirit are represented as having the same numerical divine essence with the Father, but considered in a particular manner of subsistence, or vested with peculiar personal properties. Yet at the same time, the scheme which I have proposed is free from the heaviest difficulties that lie upon the common orthodox scheme, *viz.* the eternal communication of the same individual divine essence from the Father to the Son and Spirit: For my hypothesis supposes the generation of the Son to refer to his pre-existent human soul, or to his body, or to his mediatorial office; and the procession of the Spirit to refer to his mission rather than to his existence.

Now, if we review all these considerations, and join the force of them together, perhaps it will appear, that the explication of the Trinity, by the idea of a divine being with his two divine powers, will allow such a personality to the Word and Holy Spirit, as may be sufficient to answer the representation given of them in Scripture.

Yet I will by no means contend for the use of the word *person* to express the divine nature of Christ, or the Holy Spirit. I have often asserted, and repeat it again, that when I express the doctrine of the Trinity by three persons being one God, I mean no more, than that there "are three, who have sufficient communion in one godhead to have proper divine names, titles, and attributes, ascribed to them, and sufficient distinction from each other to sustain the various characters and offices that are assigned to them in Scripture."

Perhaps the word *person* may be the best word we have to express the character of God the Father, or of Christ as God-man, in his complete constitution, as a complex being: Yet, perhaps, it may not be the very clearest and happiest term that could possibly have been found to express the characters of the Word and Spirit in a philosophical manner, considered as mere distinctions in the divine nature. But let it be remembered, that it is not the custom of Scripture, nor the design of the great and blessed God, to represent either heavenly or earthly things to us in their own

philosophical nature, where our concern in them does not depend upon a philosophical knowledge of them: And therefore in these matters God is pleased to accommodate his language to the sentiments of the bulk of the people to whom they were first written. So the Scripture speaks of the "motion of the sun," of "the fixation, or establishment and foundation of the earth," of the "pillars of the heavens," of the "heart and the reins giving instruction," as being the seat of the soul, according to the Hebrew opinion, though these things are not literally and philosophically true. Now since our salvation does not depend upon the knowledge of the precise points of unity and distinction, between Father and Son, and Spirit; or whether the Word and Spirit be proper powers, or proper persons in their own sublime nature;-but upon their divine all-sufficiency to fulfil their offices, and support their relations to us: It is very probable that God condescended to talk to his people according to their own way of thinking and talking, and to represent himself as acting by his divine powers under the character of persons, without giving us any account of the real philosophical distinctions in his incomprehensible essence, how great or how little they are: And the reason of this his conduct may be, because an exact and just philosophical account of these things is, perhaps, too transcendent for our conceptions in the present state, or that it was not necessary to meliorate our temper and practice, or promote our salvation.

Let it be further observed, that though the term *person* has been long and generally used in the christian churches to express the distinctions in the divine nature, yet it has not been universally made use of for this purpose; nor has the doctrine been confined only to this word, either in elder or in later times. Several centuries had run out after the beginning of Christianity, before this word was publicly and frequently used. Justin Martyr, a very early writer, calls the distinctions in the Trinity, *different manners of being*, τρόποι ὑπάξεως. Others of the Fathers call the *Logos*, or eternal Word, *a power of God*, according to the language of the ancient Jews.

The *Programma* of the emperor Justin, to which all the churches gave their consent, as Evagrius witnesses, *Historiæ Ecclesiasticæ*, Libro V. Capite IV. saith, "We adore the Trinity in Unity, and the Unity in Trinity; an Unity as to essence, or godhead; a Trinity as to properties or persons, ἰδιότητας ἤτοι πρόσωπα." Here *person* is explained by *property*. St. Austin, who uses the term *person*, explains the Trinity by "modes or powers of the divine nature:" representing the Father, Son, and Spirit, as "mind, wisdom, and love;" or God considered as an original eternal mind, knowing and willing himself. J. Damascene, the first of the fathers that collected a regular system of divinity, defines a person in the holy Trinity, to be "an eternal mode of eternal subsistence;" ὁ ἀναρχος τρόπος τῆς ἀιδίου ὑπάρξεως.

Thus also later christian writers use the words *mode* and *property*, to describe *a divine person*, and that sometimes even in confessions of faith. The *Wirtemberg Confession* calls the sacred Three, *properties* as well as *persons*. The *Confession of the Greek church*, 1453, calls the Father, Son, and Spirit, *three properties*, which are as it were the principles of all the other properties of God, and which are named *three subsistences* or *persons*. The *Polish Confession*, 1570, says, "They are three in their subsisting properties and dispensatory offices, yet these three are one." The same divine essence considered in a particular mode of subsistence, is the common way wherein a divine person hath been represented by most of our modern theological writers.

The sacred Trinity is usually described by them as the "divine essence with three relative properties."

The great Calvin, one of the chief glories of the reformation, describes the Son and Spirit as the "wisdom and power of God the Father;" and yet he calls them *persons*. But he resolves not to quarrel with any man merely because he will not admit the word *person*. See *Institutionum*, Libro I. Capite XIII. I might cite many authors to this purpose, who, though they use the word *person*, yet do by no means make it necessary: And there have been some who have rather disliked the word than approved of it. St. Austin himself, who uses the term with great freedom, declares, "It is not because he finds it in Scripture, but because the Scriptures do not contradict it, and that we use it by a kind of necessity, as labouring under a want of words," *Libro* VII. *De Trinitate*. And as Calvin has cited him, *Institutionum*, Libro I. Capite XIII. he declares, "It is not so much to express what is the real divine distinction, but that we might not be utterly silent how the Father, Son, and Spirit, are three."

Since therefore, neither Scripture itself applies the term *person* to the Word or Spirit, nor the elder nor later writers of the church have confined themselves to the use of this term, I can see no necessity of the confinement of ourselves, or others, to it, when we are speaking of the pure distinctions in the divine nature. And when we are endeavouring to explain them in a rational manner, and to form and adjust our clearest ideas of them, I think we may use the term *divine properties*, or rather *divine powers*, for this end: Perhaps this word *powers* comes nearest to the genuine ideas of things, so far as we can apply human words to divine ideas; and this word *powers* makes the distinction greater than properties, and I think it is so much the better. But we have several precedents for the use of both these terms among ancient writers.

And yet after all, since the Scripture has represented the Father, the Word, and the Spirit, in a personal manner, and exhibited these divine ideas to us as three distinct personal agents concerned in the works of creation and salvation; and since it has been the general custom of the christian churches, for above a thousand years, to apply the word *person* to the sacred Three; I think we may infer, that it may be safely and conveniently used in discoursing on this subject. Perhaps an introduction of any new terms into our common and popular discourses on this doctrine, would give a greater uneasiness and confusion to the minds of Christians, than would be easily counterbalanced by the advantages we might expect from any unusual words, which might be introduced under a pretence of clearer ideas.

It is true, that when we are constrained by opposers of the truth, to explain these things in a rational and philosophical manner, we may then distinguish names more accurately: We may then shew how the term *person* may be more properly and literally understood, when it is applied to God the Father, or to the complete person of Christ the mediator, as the Scripture, perhaps, has applied *hypostasis* and *prosopon*: But that the same term *person* may be metaphorical and figurative when applied to the Word and Spirit, considered as mere distinctions in the divine nature.

Yet as the Scripture frequently speaks in this figurative way, and the great God, who indited it, foreknew that multitudes of christian readers would be ready to form personal ideas under his own inspired words, I cannot think it a matter of so great importance, as that we would change all our usual forms of popular discourse on this subject.

The scriptural representations are, doubtless, sufficiently adapted both to instruct and incite us to perform all our necessary duties to the Father, Son, and Spirit, as our Creator, our Redeemer, and our Sanctifier; and it is on these depend our peace and pardon, and our hopes of everlasting happiness. And if these are well secured, let not terms and phrases engage the fury and contention of those who profess the gospel of peace. He that "dotes about vain questions, and strifes of words," incurs the censure of the Apostle, that *he is proud, knowing nothing:* This is the way to stir up *envy, strife,* and *railings,* with *evil surmises,* and *perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds,* 1 Tim. vi. 4. It is time for Christians to have done with all these: It is time for us to seek the truth in love, and to *follow after the things which make for peace, and the things whereby one may edify another,* Rom. xiv. 19. We believe in God the Father our Creator, in the Son our Redeemer, and in the eternal Spirit our Sanctifier. Let us glorify the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, by all due honours, unfeigned obedience, and everlasting praise. Amen.

DISSERTATION VII.

OF THE DISTINCTION OF PERSONS IN THE DIVINE NATURE; OR, A HUMBLE ESSAY TO ILLUSTRATE THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY, VIZ. THREE PERSONS AND ONE GOD.

SECTION I.

THE INTRODUCTION.*

WHILE I am discoursing on the sublime article of the sacred Trinity, I would always endeavour to maintain the just distinction between the general doctrine itself, and the particular modes of explication; and therefore I would first mention what I call the scriptural doctrine.

By a careful perusal of the Word of God, I hope I am arrived at a just and reasonable satisfaction in this general truth, that "there are Three, which are called the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, who are represented in Scripture as personal agents, sustaining different offices and characters in the transactions of God with his creatures; and that these three having divine titles, properties, and attributions given to them, must have such communion in the one godhead, or divine nature, as to lay a just foundation for these ascriptions." This is the general doctrine of the Trinity, which has been professed by the greatest part of the Christian world, and this is what I mean when I say more briefly, "there are three persons who are one God."

Now, since this doctrine appears to carry in it a seeming inconsistency, it has been the labour of Christians in all ages, to find out some particular schemes of explication, whereby the difficulties may be removed, and the seeming oppositions reconciled, whereby we may attain some clear conceptions, how one God may be exhibited under three personal characters.

Among the several schemes which have been proposed in order to reconcile the seeming inconsistencies of this doctrine, there is not any one of them that has given so plain, full, and satisfactory a solution to all the difficulties that arise, as to render all further attempts needless. There is yet room therefore for the employment of study and prayer, and humble endeavours to obtain clearer light.

Having surveyed the probabilities and the inconveniencies which attend the several hypotheses which I have seen, I have ventured to indulge some degrees of assent to one particular sort of explication, which seems to me more correspondent to every part of Scripture, and bids fairest for the reconciliation of some of those difficulties with

* By what I have delivered in the foregoing Dissertations, I have in some measure anticipated the design of this, though this was written before those. Yet since this Dissertation exhibits the ideas of the sacred Three, *viz.* the Father, the Word, and the Spirit, in a closer connection and mutual respect to each other, and gives a more simultaneous view of my scheme of explication, I thought it not improper to place it here, that I might lay the better foundation for an answer to those objections which have been made against the doctrine of the Trinity.

which other schemes are encumbered. But I am far from having arrived at an assurance herein, nor dare I be peremptory, or positive, in the assertion of it; for even to this hour I look upon all these hypotheses but as particular human and fallible explications of that doctrine, which in general is divine and true.

Now, though the knowledge of any of these particular schemes is by no means necessary to our salvation, yet if divine grace will assist us to set these things in a reasonable light, it will add a sensible pleasure even to our inward devotions, when we behold the great God, the object of them, in a more distinct and conspicuous view. And if by this means we can better defend the true scriptural doctrine of the Trinity from the objections of men, we shall do some honour to the truths of God and his gospel, and perhaps, by this means, we may have the happiness of establishing the faith of Christians.

In order to explain in what sense three persons may be one God, we should first inquire, whether these personalities be intrinsic to the godhead or no? A late ingenious writer maintains, that "though the Scripture plainly reveals the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, to be three distinct persons, and to be one God, yet that the Scripture does no where determine, that these three are distinct persons in the divine essence itself." He supposes also that "the Son and Spirit may have inferior natures, but being intimately united to the godhead of the Father, they may be said so far to participate of deity as to have all divine names, titles, and characters, ascribed to them, without the supposition of any manner of intrinsic distinctions in the godhead itself." See *The Scripture Trinity intelligibly explained, by a Divine of the Church of England*, Dr. Thomas Burnet, Prebendary of Salisbury, particularly pages 139—145.

Though the hypothesis of this author is formed with much ingenuity, and has some plausible appearances in it, yet I cannot give up my assent to it, for I freely declare it is my opinion, that the λόγος and the πνεῦμα, that is, the *Word* and the *Spirit*, in Scripture, are described as properly divine in their own natures, and yet in their divine characters are distinguished from God the Father.

There is another reason also, why I cannot give in to this hypothesis, and that is, we know from Scripture that the Son has a nature inferior to godhead, but there is no sufficient evidence that the blessed Spirit has any such inferior nature, even while it is granted there are several economical inferiorities ascribed to him. The Spirit never seems to be represented as a complex being, or person formed of God and a creature united, though the Son be thus exhibited to us.

Though there be not therefore any express assertion in Scripture, that there are three distinct personalities in the godhead itself, yet I cannot hitherto find any method of explication sufficient to adjust all the parts of this sacred doctrine according to Scripture without supposing some distinctions in the divine nature. Then the inquiry follows, what sort of distinction is sufficient to answer the scriptural account of the blessed Three?

The distinctions, or differences which we can suppose in the godhead, are these which follow:

1. A distinction of names, and external relations derived from creatures; this is drawn from God's relation to the works of his hands, as when the same divine essence, or God, is called the Creator, the Redeemer, and the Sanctifier, because of the dif-

ferent operations and relations of God to men. By this some have explained the holy Trinity.

2. A distinction of names, and internal relations, which is drawn from different relative properties in the divine nature itself, as they are usually called; thus the Father, Son, and Spirit, are described by some as a threefold repetition of the self-same divine essence, with some inconceivable internal relations to each other, which are called paternity, filiation, and spiration.

3. A distinction of modes, or properties, as when the different attributes of the divine nature, *viz.* power, wisdom, and goodness, are represented as a sacred Trinity.

Note, Those who suppose the sacred doctrine of the Trinity to be sufficiently explained by either of these three distinctions, are called modal trinitarians.

4. Another distinction is that of divine powers, as when the divine essence, with its two different powers of mind and will, or principles of knowledge and efficiency, are represented as the blessed Three, the Father, the Word, and the Spirit. May I not call this real in some sense, since there is a plain reality in the distinction, though it arise not to distinct substances?

5. A real and substantial distinction; as when the Father, Son, and Spirit, are supposed literally to be three proper, distinct, conscious agents, or three real intelligent natures, which some have called three substances, three infinite minds, united to compose one godhead. And, indeed, if they are three distinct conscious principles, or have a different consciousness, I know not how to form any other idea of them than as of three conscious minds, though some writers are not so free in their expressions as to speak what the notion plainly intends. Those who explain the Trinity in this manner are called real trinitarians.

If I might be permitted to speak with freedom my sentiments of these several opinions, I would say, that the three first of these distinctions do scarce seem to afford a sufficient difference for the various ascriptions which are given to the Father, the Word, and Spirit, in Scripture; and as for the second distinction, it has this further inconvenience, that it seems to be made up of words rather than ideas.

The fifth distinction, so far as my ideas of it reach, represents the godhead as containing in it three real, proper, distinct, intelligent agents, three natures, or three conscious minds. The fear of approaching to the doctrine of tritheism, or three gods, withholds my assent, at present, from that scheme.

Among all these distinctions, and differences, therefore, in my opinion, the fourth seems to come nearest to the scriptural representation of things, which describes God and his nature to us by an analogy to our own intellectual natures, or our own souls. This distinction of the divine essence, with its two eternal powers of mind and will, is the greatest real distinction, and the most solid difference that we can conceive in one Spirit: And therefore I rather incline to it, because the doctrine of the sacred Three, as represented in Scripture, seems to require the greatest distinction that can be conceived in a consistence with the unity of God, who is the infinite and eternal Spirit.

If there be some distinctions, or differences, in the divine nature, greater than that of relations, modes, or attributes, and less than that of substances, I know not what name to give it better, than that of divine powers. Let us therefore suppose the great and blessed God to be one infinite Spirit, one conscious being, who possesses real, dis-

tinct, or different powers, which in sacred language are called the *Word* and the *Spirit:* And though this difference, or distinction, be not so great as to allow of different consciousnesses, or to make distinct spirits, yet these two powers may be represented in Scripture in a figurative manner, under distinct personal characters, as hath been shewn in the foregoing Dissertations.

SECTION II.

A GENERAL PROPOSAL OF THE ANALOGY BETWEEN GOD AND A HUMAN SOUL.

THAT we may go on step by step, and make regular advances towards the design in hand, let us consider, that whatsoever clear ideas we frame of God by the light of nature, we derive them from an inward reflection on our own souls, and their various properties and powers of understanding and will, &c. supposing still the transcendent superiority of God above ourselves.

Let us consider also, that the clearest and noblest ideas by which God reveals himself to us in Scripture, are derived from the same notions which we have of our souls as spiritual beings: It is by this way of analogy that we learn and understand what God is, when he tells us he is a Spirit, and when he speaks of his knowledge, his wisdom, his will, &c. Thus divine revelation happily agrees with human reason, in teaching us who or what God is, by a resemblance of his incomprehensible nature and powers to the ideas we have of our own souls and their faculties.

I grant, that God has been pleased to condescend so far to the lowest capacities, as to describe his powers to us, sometimes by analogy to the powers and parts of our bodies, such as, eyes, ears, face, hands, breath, voice, word, &c. But these are not the clearest or nearest similitudes, nor the sublimest likenesses he has given us of himself: And therefore when we are endeavouring to form our highest and most spiritual conceptions of God, we look rather upon that analogy to our own souls in which he has been pleased to exhibit himself to us.

Since reason and Scripture agree to teach us the nature of God, and inform us who or what God is, by this analogy, I think in our inquiries on this sacred subject we ought to follow this analogy so far as reason and Scripture allow us. Now it is evident, that a human soul, in its nature, is one conscious mind; and it is utterly inconsistent with the nature of it to have two or three distinct conscious principles or natures in it, that is, to include two or three different conscious beings; and since we are told, that God is one, and God is a Spirit, it would be something strange if we must believe that God is two or three spirits.

And as the nature of our souls teaches us to conceive the nature of God, so the powers of our souls, by the same dictates of nature and Scripture, teach us to conceive the powers of God. Since the human soul has two distinct powers, *viz.* the knowing power, called the *mind,* and the active power, called the *will,* why may we not suppose the blessed God to have two distinct powers, called the *Word,* and the *Spirit,** the one cognoscitive, and the other active?

* Though the names *Word* and *Spirit,* or *speech* and *breath,* are borrowed originally some from the body, and some from the soul of man, yet the divine ideas which are represented by these names in Scripture, are entirely spiritual, and therefore we must derive our best conceptions of them by their analogy to our own souls.

Or, as the human soul has in it intelligence, volition, and a power of moving the body, so if there were any single term which signified both intelligence and volition together, I would choose to apply that to the divine Word:* And if any single term signified the power of operation, or moving the body, I would apply that to the Holy Spirit; because I think this analogy and resemblance would come something nearer to the scriptural ideas of the *Word* and *Spirit;* the one being represented rather as an intelligent, volitive power, the other as an intelligent effective power. But since we have no such terms ready made, and since my design here is not so presuming, as to express what the powers of deity are in themselves, but only to exhibit a sort of distant human resemblance of them, I shall content myself with the terms *mind* and *will* to express this analogy and resemblance, always supposing the term *will* to imply an active efficient faculty.

Here let it be observed, that in explaining these distinctions in the divine nature itself, I choose to call the second person the *Word*, rather than the *Son;* for as some late writers suppose, that the sonship of Christ rather refers to his human nature, or to his mediatorial office, than to his godhead, so I must declare, I am much inclined to that sentiment.

Let it be also observed, that I use the name *Word* in this Dissertation in its divinest sense, *viz.* to signify a power in the divine nature, as, I think, it is several times used in Scripture, and not in that inferior sense, for the soul of the Messiah, as it seems to have been used by some jewish writers, and, perhaps, with some countenance from Scripture also.

Though we must not imagine, that the *Word* and *Spirit* in the divine nature are exactly the same, as *mind* and *will*, or *intelligence* and *power*, in a created spirit, yet this is not a mere arbitrary illustration, or a similitude invented by fancy; for there seems to be a reasonable and sufficient foundation for it in the sacred writings: This will appear if we consider what follows:

The second person in the Trinity is supposed by learned writers to be represented in several places in Scripture under the name of *divine wisdom*, or *understanding*, and that not only in that glorious chapter, *Prov.* viii. where it is generally agreed to have this sense, but also in the ninth chapter, where "Wisdom built her house, sends forth her maidens, and crieth to the simple, Turn in hither." There are also other texts applied by some interpreters to Christ, or the divine Word, *viz. Jer.* x. 12, and li. 15, and *Prov.* iii. 19, 20, where God is said to "form or establish the world by his understanding or wisdom;" as in other places, "God created all things by his word," *John* i. 3, or by Jesus Christ, *Ephes.* iii. 9. And our Saviour himself is supposed to call himself "the wisdom of God," referring to his pre-existent state, *Luke* xi. 49, *Therefore, said the wisdom of God, I will send them, prophets, &c.* And again, referring to his incarnate state, Luke vii. 34, 35, *The Son of man is come eating and drinking, and*

* The *Logos*, or divine Word, in Scripture, sometimes signifies a word of knowledge, or manifestation, and sometimes a word of command or volition; and therefore if we had one single term for the intellect and will in a human soul, perhaps it would more exactly represent the divine *Logos*. Let it be noted also, that some of the ancient fathers call the *Logos*, the τὸ θέλημα, or *will of God*, as well as the Σοφία, or *wisdom* And Calvin, in his *Commentary on the first verse of the Gospel of St. John*, says, "The Son of God is called the *Logos, sermo*, that is, *word* or *speech*, because he is first the eternal wisdom and will of God, *Dei sapientia et voluntas*, and then the express image of his counsel."

ye say, Behold a gluttonous man and a wine-bibber, &c. But wisdom is justified of all her children.

Let it be noted too, that the ancient Jews represented the word of God, and the wisdom of God, in such a personal manner, as appears in the books of *Ecclesiasticus* and *Wisdom*, in the *Apocrypha*, which some divines have applied to the Messiah. See more in the *Discourse on the Logos*, pages 423—453.

It is manifest also, that the Spirit of God is represented as a divine active power. Luke i. 35, *The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee.* And our Saviour is said to be "anointed with the Spirit," which is explained, *Acts* x. 38, "Jesus was anointed with the Holy Ghost and with power." And whereas in some texts it is said, Christ wrought his miracles *by the Spirit of God;* in other places it is called *the finger of God;* and *Luke* v. 17, when Christ wrought miraculous cures, it is said *the power of the Lord was present to heal:* So the apostle preached, 1 Cor. ii. 4, *in demonstration of the Spirit and of power;* and other texts might be cited to this purpose. See the *Discourse on the Holy Spirit*, pages 466—490.

And as the ancient Jews, in their writings concur with the Scripture in representing the *Logos*, or Word of God, as the divine wisdom, so they describe the Spirit of God as another divine power; and some of them take the Spirit of God for his will, for which sense Doctor Allix, in his *Judgment of the Jewish Church*, page 155, cites Maimonides, and others.

The wisdom, and the effective power of God, are joined in several places in Scripture, as being employed in creating the world: Jer. li. 15, *He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom*, which is repeated *Jer.* x. 12, and seems akin to Psalm xxxiii. 6, *By the Word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the* Spirit, or *breath of his mouth.* And there are several other Scriptures where the Word of God, and his Spirit, as well as where wisdom and power are represented as agents, or mediums, by which God created all things.

I do not pretend to produce all these Scriptures as divine arguments or proofs of my hypothesis, but only to shew, that the similitude I make use of is not a mere invention of my own, but there is much colour for it in the sacred writings themselves, as well as in the sense of many christian interpreters.

May we not therefore conceive the Word and Spirit as two divine faculties, virtues, or powers, in the essence of God? What if we should call the Word, for distinction sake, a divine power, or faculty of knowing and contriving all things? The Spirit an executive power, or faculty, which wills and effects all things? Or, as I noted before, what if the Word rather include knowledge and volition, and the Spirit the divine power of efficience? Not that I would exclude all efficacy from the Word, or intelligence from the Spirit; for the holy penmen do not confine themselves to such a learned and philosophical accuracy. The ideas of these divine powers are oftentimes intermingled in Scripture. Sometimes the properties of the Word may be attributed to the Spirit, and those of the Spirit to the Word; for they are both the inseparable powers of an intelligent almighty being, and have incomprehensible union and communion with each other.* But since God is pleased sometimes to represent his own knowledge

* I might here cite some of the primitive christian fathers, as Justin Martyr, Athenagoras, Theophilus, Tatian, Tertullian, Irenæus, and others, who speak of the word, wisdom, power, counsel, mind, reason, and will of God

and his agency by his wisdom or Word, and his Spirit, why may we not conceive two powers or faculties in the divine nature somewhat analogous to our mind and our will, though they are not the same; since the chief knowledge we can attain to of the blessed God is by analogy to our own souls?

Here let it be noted, that when I represent the Word and Spirit by divine wisdom and power, I do not conceive them merely as two attributes of the divine nature, as justice, goodness, eternity, infinity, &c. but as such distinct faculties, or, perhaps, more distinct than the understanding and will are in human spirits, which two are called powers, rather than properties of the soul.

I grant, that sometimes the terms *attribute*, *property*, *power*, may be used promiscuously for each other; but when there is a distinction made between them, the terms *property* or *attribute*, are applied to any sort of modes or qualities, especially the essential ones, that belong to a subject: So immateriality, immortality, finiteness, changeableness, &c. are natural attributes of the human soul: Kindness, justice, faithfulness, &c. are moral attributes of a good man. But the term *power* denotes a distinct principle of physical agency in the subject, whereby it is rendered capable of acting in this or that manner: So the understanding and the will, so the faculty of perceiving sensible objects, and the faculty of moving the body, are properly called the powers of the soul.

In the same manner, by way of analogy, we may suppose infinity, eternity, unchangeableness, &c. to be the natural attributes of God; goodness, justice, truth, are his moral attributes; for none of these are properly physical principles, or capacities of action. But his Word, and his Spirit, seem to be represented in Scripture as the physical principles of knowing, willing, and efficiency, and therefore I call them powers, because this sort of ideas seems to admit of a greater distinction, both in God and in creatures, than those qualities which we usually call attributes or properties.

The reader will pardon the necessary impropriety, or unsuitableness, of some of these terms, when applied to the great and blessed God, since we are forced to borrow all our representations of divine things from analogy to human ideas, and the terms of human language.

I proceed now to set this distinction of the divine persons in an easy light, and represent it in one contracted view, under the few following queries.

SECTION III.

SEVERAL QUERIES TO ILLUSTRATE THIS DOCTRINE.

Query I. As the soul includes in it both the powers of understanding and acting, that is mind and will, may not the soul properly represent the complete divine nature,

the Father, signifying by these various terms, his Word and his Spirit, which two Irenæus calls *semetipsum*, or himself. The reader may find many such citations if he consult the learned Doctor Waterland and his antagonists in *The Defence and Opposition of the Queries;* particularly Query II. and VIII. &c. *Concerning the Divinity of Christ, his Eternity, his Generation, &c.* The author of the *Questions and Answers,* which are joined with the works of Justin Martyr, says, "God, or the Father, and the Word his Son, and the Holy Spirit, ἐνέμινα μὲν καὶα δύναμιν, are united as far as possible, for the Son is the mind, word, wisdom of the Father, and the Spirit is an emanation, as light from fire." *Question* 139. The primitive fathers do not always confine their language to such a philosophical niceness, but sometimes use those terms promiscuously, whereby they explain the Word and the Spirit.

or God? And may not his Word and Spirit be represented by the human mind and will, that is, the power of knowing and contriving, and the power of effecting?

Some of the ancients have represented the Father as the whole of the godhead, and the Son and Spirit as his powers. Hippolytus, an anti-nicene father, expresses himself in this manner, τὸ δὲ πᾶν παλὴρ, ἐξ ὃ δύναμις λόγος. "The Father is the whole, from whom is the power called the *Logos* or Word." Irenæus calls the Word and Spirit of God, God's own self, *semetipsum*, for they are always present with him as his word and his wisdom, Libro II. Capite LVI. And Tertullian saith, *Pater tota substantia est: Filius vero derivatio et portio totius.* "The Father is the whole substance, but the Son is a derivation and portion of the whole." *Contra Praxeam*, Capite IX.

In some of the foregoing dissertations I have shewn, that not only the primitive fathers, but modern writers of the greatest reputation, have represented God as one spiritual being, and the Word, or Son, and the Spirit, as the wisdom and power of God the Father. And it may be made to appear, that this is not only the sentiment of single divines, but multitudes of them met together in synods, to form confessions of faith, have used the same manner of speaking. I shall mention only these two:

The *Confession of the French Churches*, 1561, saith, "God is one only simple spiritual essence, and in that singular and divine essence there subsist three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The Father, the first in order, the cause and original of all things; the Son, his wisdom and eternal Word; the Holy Spirit, his virtue, power, and efficacy."

The Dutch *Confession*, composed 1561, and confirmed in a synod of the churches, 1579, saith, "There is one only simple and spiritual essence, which we call God, and that in this one God are three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The Father is the cause, origin, and beginning of all things, visible and invisible; the Son is the Word, wisdom, and image of the Father; the Holy Spirit, the eternal virtue, and power," &c.

Query II. May not the soul be described as employing its mind and will in different exercises or actions? May not a spirit properly say, "I employed my mind to search out such a truth; I engaged my will in such a pious resolution, or in the practice of such a duty?" And in the same manner, may not God be said to employ his divine powers in his work of creation, *viz.* his Word in contriving, and his Spirit in effecting all things? Or in his works of grace, *viz.* the Word in redemption, and the Spirit in sanctification? Thus God created all things by his Word and Spirit, and he saves mankind by the same Word and Spirit.* The great God, by his word or wisdom, directs the agency of his Spirit or executive power.

Query III. May not the soul be sometimes considered as the prime agent, in distinction from the mind and will, while the soul is said to employ the mind and will in particular transactions? And thus, while the divine nature, or God, employs his two powers, the Word and Spirit, may he not sometimes in this view be esteemed, in an economical sense, the chief agent, and thus sustain a distinct sort of personality, even

* God is not only said to "act by his Word and his Spirit," but he is sometimes said to "send forth his Word," and sometimes "his Spirit;" yet all this may be very fairly expounded concerning two divine powers, since, in other places of Scripture, God is said to send several things which have no proper personality, Psalm lvii. 3, *God shall send forth his mercy and his truth.* Psalm lxxviii. 49, where the original Hebrew by the same word expresses "God sending forth the fierceness of his anger, wrath, and indignation, as he does the sending forth of evil angels." Psalm cxi. 9, *He sent redemption unto his people.* Psalm xx. 1, 2, *The Lord—send thee help from the sanctuary.*

what is usually called personality of the Father, though it may not signify that he is the author or producer of the Word, or of the Spirit?

Is it not generally given as one reason, why Christ is called *the Son of God* in his pre-existent nature, *viz.* that he is appointed to his royal offices by God himself, considered as the supreme rector of the world? Now, if Christ may be called a *Son* in Scripture, *Psalm* ii. 7, and *Psalm* lxxxix. 27, as being deputed to the mediatorial government, why may not God, the supreme rector of the world, who deputes him to this government, be called *the Father* on this account? *Psalm* lxxxix. 26. Surely I should suppose, that those who grant a filiation to be derived from the economy, might allow the same concerning paternity.

Query IV. Is God ever called *the Father* in Scripture, as giving birth or origin to the divine nature, either of the Word or Spirit? Are they ever plainly represented as depending upon him, or derived from him, as to their divine existence? Does not the word *Father* rather signify the godhead, considered as the supreme head, as the spring and origin of all creatures, or as being the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ as man? Or, at most, as only sustaining the character of the Father, or chief agent, in the economy of creation and redemption?

Query V. May not the human mind and the will be represented in a personal manner, or as distinct personal agents, at least by a figurative way of speaking, though they are but two powers of the same soul? May I not use such language as this: "My mind has laboured hard to find out such a difficulty; my will is resolutely bent to pursue such a course?" And many other common expressions there are of the same nature, wherein the mind and will are still more evidently and plainly represented as persons.

And since human powers are thus represented as persons, why may not the Word and the Spirit, which are divine powers, be thus represented also? And why may not God be represented as a person transacting his own divine affairs with his Word and his Spirit under personal characters, since a man is often represented as transacting human affairs with his understanding, mind, will, reason, fancy, or conscience, in a personal manner? See this treated of more at large in the considerations contained in the *Dissertation on the Use of the Word Person.* See pages 477—485.

Query VI. Have not the greatest part of the writers on this subject applied the word *person* to such sort of ideas, or distinctions in the divine nature, as would not bear the proper and literal application of that word, which properly and literally signifies "a distinct conscious mind?" And therefore they have been constrained to use the word in an analogical and figurative sense. The reverend Doctor Wallis, in his *Letters on the Doctrine of the Trinity,* illustrates this doctrine of the Father, Son, and Spirit, by the essence, the wisdom, and the force, or executive power of a human soul, Letter I. page 16; and freely acknowledges, that the name of *person,* when it is applied to this divine subject, is metaphorical, or figurative. And, indeed, those who make the greatest distinction between the sacred Three, *viz.* the true athanasians, do still suppose, that the word *person* is not taken in the most complete sense of three separate or separable spirits, as three men, or three angels, when it is applied to the doctrine of the Trinity.

Query VII. Since the mind and will make up the soul, and the soul acts by them in all things that it doth, may not each of these powers be called *the soul?* May we not say, "the mind is the soul," or "the will is the soul?" So if the Word and

Spirit are those divine powers by which God doth every thing, may not each of them be called *God?* May we not say, " the Word is God," and " the Spirit is God?" May not what each of them does be appropriated to God, since they are the powers by which God operates? And does not this bid fair for the true meaning of Scripture, where such sort of language appears? And especially when we consider that this is the language of the ancient Jews and the primitive Christians, who called the *Logos* God, and attribute to God what is done by his divine Word or his Spirit.

Query VIII. Doth not this representation of things shew how the sacred Three, that is, the Father, the Word, and the Spirit, have sufficient unity, or oneness of nature, to be exhibited to us in Scripture as one God, and yet how they may have a sufficient distinction between them, to be set forth, especially in the language of the eastern nations, where the Scripture was written, as three personal agents? Thus there are " Three that dwell in heaven, and bear witness to the gospel; the Father, the Word, and the Spirit; and these three are one;" 1 *John* v. 7. For the proof of the divine authority of this text, see the learned Dr. Calamy's *Sermons* at the end of his *Treatise of the Trinity,* which contain arguments in them that are hardly to be refuted.

SECTION IV.

THE CONCLUSION.

FAR be it from me to assert this explication of the sacred doctrine of the Trinity with any positive airs, or in assured language: Much less would I demand the assent of others, and pretend to determine their opinion or faith of this mystery, by my manner of comparing it with things human, even though the comparisons and resemblances are borrowed from divine revelation. All that I aim at here, is to gain, and give as clear and distinct ideas as I can of the words which the Scripture uses, that as far as possible, in explaining the word of God, I might secure myself and others from talking without ideas. And since I think it is evident, that the Scripture represents each of the sacred Three as true God, and yet represents them sometimes under distinct personal characters, my only design and ambition is, to make out at least some possibility of this sacred doctrine to the understandings of men, to secure it from ridicule and contempt, and to wipe off that unreasonable reproach of nonsense and absurdity, which has been by too many writers so plentifully thrown upon the deep things of God, merely because they seem too hard to be perfectly adjusted and explained by men.

Though I have used some human comparisons in this and the foregoing Dissertations, and have formed some resemblances between the great God and the soul of man, yet let none imagine, that things divine can be exactly paralleled, or adjusted by any precise conformity to things human; I presume no further, than to exhibit a sketch, or distant shadow of heavenly things. The name of God has something in it so superior to all our human ideas, that it may be doubted, whether his very essence may not be something almost as much superior to our ideas of a spirit, as a spirit is superior to a body.

When God is pleased to represent his powers and actions by corporeal images, such as hands, ears, eyes, seeing, hearing, &c. we are sure this is not proper, but analogical

language. When God is described as a Spirit as to his essence or substance; when Scripture speaks of his understanding, his will, his word, and his Spirit, it may bear an inquiry, whether this be a most exact, natural, and univocal description of him; or, whether it be not rather a sort of similar representation of God by way of condescension to our human ideas. It is hard, if not impossible, for us, in some cases, to say infallibly, that this or that is true concerning God the Father, his Word, or his Spirit, because it is true concerning creatures; that this or that cannot be true concerning God the Father, his Word, or his Spirit, because, perhaps, it cannot be true concerning creatures; for the most exalted ranks of creatures that we know, are very poor imperfect shadows of the Creator.

I cannot think it reasonable, indeed, to interpret the natural divine attributes or perfections, such as knowledge, power, goodness, so entirely in an analogical sense, as that ingenious author, the Archbishop of Dublin,* has done, because our common ideas of these words, knowledge, power, goodness, are more applicable to the divine nature in an univocal sense: Yet this sacred doctrine of three personalities relating to one divine essence, may with much better reason be explained or construed in this analogical manner, since our common ideas of Father, Word, Spirit, person, are not so applicable thereto in an univocal signification. I am well assured, that if such analogical explications be allowable in any part of theology, the doctrine of the Trinity lays the best claim to it.

I add further also, that every scheme and explication of this sacred doctrine amongst the real or modal trinitarians, which hath had any manner of claim to orthodoxy, does suppose the divine essence to have something in it that is not univocal to our ideas of a spirit: The most orthodox explainers are all forced to represent the distinctions of persons in the godhead, as something for which there is no perfect parallel in created spirits, and are forced to recur to analogical ideas, and analogical language.

Now if it be so, then who shall determine what differences and distinctions may be found in a nature or essence so infinitely superior to all our thoughts, so much unknown, and so incomprehensible? And why may not the blessed God represent these distinctions in his own nature, in a way of personality, or as three distinct persons, supposing that such a representation will easily lead the bulk of mankind into such conceptions of his economical transactions with us, as are fit to engage them to adore, worship, trust in, and love their Creator, their Redeemer, and their Sanctifier? All these duties we may practise by the influence of scriptural revelation, without a philosophical or univocal idea of what the great God is in his own sublime, abstruse, and unsearchable essence. "God is great, and we know him not." Thousands of saints and martyrs have gone to heaven with triumph by the practice of these duties, under the influence of a humble faith, without further philosophical inquiries.

It will be replied then, "What has made the Christians of all ages so curious to penetrate further into these deep things of God, than was necessary for their own faith and practice in order to salvation?"

To answer this, let it be observed, that there may be some advantages for the increase of christian knowledge, for personal piety, and for the instruction of others, derived from our pursuit of clear ideas in the great doctrines of the gospel. But to lay that

* Dr. William King.

consideration aside at present, there is another answer, very obvious and easy, and it is this: The primitive Christians found perpetual objections against the doctrines of their faith raised by the heathen writers; this constrained them to enter into a deeper inquiry; and the violent opposition that was made to those doctrines by the patrons of several errors in the first and following ages, set the Christians in every age at work to draw out the matters of their belief into various human forms; and they did this in order to defend them against those who attacked them in a variety of methods of human reasoning and artifice. And particularly in the present controversy, when the opposers in all ages have endeavoured to represent the doctrine of the Trinity as utterly inconsistent both with reason and Scripture, the believers of this doctrine have found it proper to search out some way and manner in which it is possible this doctrine may be conceived without such inconsistency.

For my part, I confess, that my faith, as a Christian, had contented itself with more general ideas of this doctrine, without inquiring so far at least into the *modus* of it, had it not been for the various objections that are raised against the possibility of it in any form or *modus* whatsoever. And though I have now taken the freedom to declare that I prefer the representation which I have given in these discourses above any other schemes of explication which I have seen, yet I am not so vain as to expect, that this hypothesis will immediately relieve every difficulty that attends the sacred doctrine of the Trinity. I am well aware of various exceptions that will be made, and I have carefully considered some of the most important of them in papers that lie by me. I have also made experiment, how happily this scheme furnishes out an answer to the chief exceptions of a considerable, but unknown writer, who has attacked my little *Discourse of the Christian Doctrine of the Trinity*, in *A Sober Appeal to a Turk or an Indian*. Part of a reply to that book has been already made in the second and third dissertations, printed last year. Several parts more are ready to follow this. But it was necessary to exhibit the scheme on which the solution of difficulties is founded, before I could pretend to solve the difficulties themselves: And the printed sheets have swelled to such a bulk already, as renders it very inconvenient to crowd all my design into this volume. According to the acceptance that these papers meet with in the world, I may be encouraged shortly to publish the rest.

After all, I am free to declare, that I am not so fond of any particular hypothesis, but I shall be ready to relinquish it for another, that will afford a better interpretation of all the Scriptures that relate to the blessed Three, and a happier solution of all the objections that have been raised against this article. I should rejoice to see so clear and bright an explication of it arise in the christian world, as shall overcome and scatter all the difficulties and darknesses that have hitherto hung about it, and shall set it in so divine and triumphant a light, as shall penetrate every soul, diffuse universal conviction, and demand a ready and unshaken assent. But, perhaps, it is above the privilege of a mortal state, to expect the accomplishment of such a wish. In the mean while, let us pay the homage of our understandings to the supreme incomprehensible, by firmly believing what God has plainly revealed, and wait for the favours of higher illumination in the regions of light and immortality. Amen.

USEFUL AND IMPORTANT

QUESTIONS

CONCERNING

JESUS THE SON OF GOD,

FREELY PROPOSED;

WITH A HUMBLE ATTEMPT TO ANSWER THEM ACCORDING TO SCRIPTURE.

THE

PREFACE.

It cannot be of much importance for the reader to be informed who was the writer of these papers: Yet if it will be any satisfaction, the author himself presumes to say, it is one who has spent many years of his life in diligent inquiries into the sacred doctrines of the gospel, by a constant and laborious search of the holy Scriptures, nor is he ashamed to add, with continual application to the God of all light and grace for the instruction of his Holy Spirit, that he might better understand the things discovered in his word. He also takes the freedom to say, these papers are the product of that part of life when his powers of mind and body were in full vigour.

The author has sometimes been ready to suppose, that several of the questions here proposed, may be very useful towards the further explaining some of those parts of Scripture which have been less studied, especially concerning God the Father, and the divine and human natures of his Son Jesus Christ, whom to know, to trust in, and to love, is eternal life: And he thinks he can safely appeal to God concerning the honesty and sincerity of his own endeavours, to give a faithful answer to all these inquiries, according to the clearest light he could find in the holy Scriptures.

He has one favour to beg of his readers, and that is, that they would not examine any of these papers by the mere dictates of their own reasoning powers, for the subject is a mere matter of divine revelation; nor that they would take the sentiments or schemes of elder or later writers, whether schoolmen or fathers, or divines of any party, for a perfect test of truth and orthodoxy in these sacred subjects.

Yet he freely and delightfully confesses these following articles, borrowed from the *Athanasian Creed*, *viz.* "We believe and confess the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is both God and man; God of the same substance with the Father, and man of the substance of his mother, born into the world; perfect God and perfect man; of a reasonable soul and human flesh subsisting together: Equal to the Father, as touching his godhead, and yet inferior to the Father, as touching his manhood: One, not by conversion of the godhead into the flesh, but by taking of the manhood into God, so as to become one personal agent, or one person: And as the reasonable soul and flesh is one man, so God and man are one Christ, who suffered for our salvation," &c.

Though I freely and cheerfully acknowledge all this, yet I take no human writings for a test of the divinity or truth of my opinions: And I could wish all my readers would lay aside all other teachers, besides the mere writers of the holy Scriptures, in such inquiries where the light of these divine truths will also shine brightest, which are not to be known by the mere light of nature, but are entirely to be learned by the revelation of God to his Son Jesus Christ, and to his holy apostles.

And if this practice be sincerely pursued, the author humbly hopes these papers may find acceptance among the diligent and honest inquirers after truth, so far at least as to have his unwilling mistakes pitied and forgiven, and his sincere endeavours accepted, to make known the Scripture to his fellow Christians in those important articles that relate to God the Father, and his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which are of so much importance toward our salvation.

Yet finally, to avoid all objections and dangers of mistake, I think it may be proper here to take notice, that there have been generally two ways among our protestant divines allowed to explain the filiation or sonship of our Lord Jesus Christ, in his divine nature; the one is, the real and supernatural, which is granted to be utterly incomprehensible, relating chiefly to the nature of the Father and the Son; the other is scriptural and economical, relating chiefly to their characters or offices in our salvation, which is more easy to be understood: I must acknowledge, I incline most to the second, because this allows the most perfect equality, even oneness or sameness in the godhead, whether applied to the Father or the Son, and thus it maintains the true godhead itself to be underived and self-existent in both; and upon this supposition I believe the second of these writers have been always esteemed perfectly sound and orthodox, as well as the first.

USEFUL AND IMPORTANT QUESTIONS

CONCERNING

JESUS THE SON OF GOD,

FREELY PROPOSED, &c.

QUESTION I.

WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THE NAME "SON OF GOD," AS GIVEN TO CHRIST IN THE NEW TESTAMENT, WHERE THE BELIEF OF IT IS NECESSARY TO SALVATION?

INTRODUCTION.

IT is of some importance in the doctrines of the gospel, and especially in the great article of the blessed Trinity, to know the meaning of the name *Son of God*, which is so often given to our Lord Jesus Christ in the New Testament: For hereby we shall be better able to understand the chief import and design of those places of Scripture.

But here I desire my reader to observe, that I am not inquiring into the highest and most sublime sense of which it is possible that our Lord himself might have the idea when he used that word; but what is the sense that Christ, or the apostles and writers of the New Testament, more directly designed to convey to those who heard them, and in what sense the people generally could and did understand this name?

It is evident from several expressions of Christ, that he well knew that his own words sometimes carried in them a much nobler and sublimer signification, than barely that which he designed to convey to the Jews, or even to his own disciples at that time: As when he says to the Jews, *Before Abraham was, I am*, John viii. 58. And so when he says to his disciples, John xiv. 10, *I am in the Father, and the Father in me*, they could not know that glorious and sublime relation of Christ to the Father, and his intimate oneness with the Father, which he himself was perfectly acquainted with.

My chief business in this discourse, therefore, is only to shew what is the true idea or meaning of the word *Son of God*, which our Saviour or the sacred writers designed to convey to their disciples through all ages and nations by this name, and in which it is possible their hearers could understand them, or we who read the same words.

And, in order to find this sense of it, let us consider those texts of Scripture wherein the belief of Christ to be the Son of God is made the great requisite in order to salvation, and a necessary ingredient of Christianity. For in these places of Scripture, these two considerations will offer themselves; first, that the sense of these words must be "plain, familiar, and easy to be understood," otherwise it could not be made a necessary article, or a fundamental of the christian faith. It must

have also, secondly, "some apparent connection with and influence into our salvation," otherwise the belief of it would not have been made so grand a reqnisite in order to be saved; for it is scarce to be imagined that the blessed God would appoint any mere arbitrary and unoperative speculations to be the terms of our enjoying his favour. Now both these considerations will give us some assistance toward our finding out the true sense of this title.

The texts of Scripture, wherein a belief of Jesus to be the Son of God seems to be made the great necessary term of our salvation, are such as these: John iii. 18, *He that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.* John xx. 31, *These things are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through his name.* 1 John v. 13, *These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God,* 1 John iv. 15, *Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him.* 1 John ii. 23, *Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father.* Acts viii. 37, *And Philip said* to the eunuch, *If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest* be baptized; *and he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God —and he baptized him.*

Now if believing or not believing Christ to be the Son of God, has salvation and damnation annexed to it by the sacred writers, then surely it is of considerable importance to know what this name means, that we may not include too little in it, and by leaving out some important part, expose ourselves to that anathema; nor include too much in it, and so be tempted to lay our weaker neighbours under the like condemnation for want of sufficient knowledge.

But, blessed be God, since it is a name of such importance, he has not confined this name precisely to one single, narrow, abstruse, and difficult idea, but has affixed it to several ideas in Scripture, that so if we receive it in the most important senses, we may be secured from the scriptural condemnation, though we should not happen to understand and receive it in all the sublime senses which may be applied to it.

Let it be noted also, that perhaps the various imaginations and reasonings of men may have affixed more senses to this phrase than Scripture has ever done: Yet, in order to give this inquiry a fuller consideration, we will survey the several senses which have been usually put upon it; and this shall be the first argument which I shall use toward the proof of the true signification of this name in the New Testament, that is, by way of a disjunctive syllogism proposing several, and excluding some of them.

SECTION I.

THE FIRST ARGUMENT TOWARD THE PROOF OF THE SENSE OF THIS NAME, "SON OF GOD."

THIS name, *Son of God,* hath been supposed to be given to our Lord Jesus Christ upon some or all of these five accounts:—1. Because of an eternal and

inconceivable generation by the person of the Father in the sameness of the divine essence.—2. Because of the glorious derivation of his human soul from God before the creation of this world.—3. Because of his incarnation, or coming into this world, by an extraordinary conception, and birth of a virgin without an earthly father, by the immediate operation of God.—4. Because of his resurrection from the dead, and high exaltation.—5. In order to point out that glorious person who had in general some sublime and singular relation to God, and who also was to sustain the character and office of the Messiah, the Saviour of the world.

I. The first of these senses is patronised by many writers, *viz.* "That an eternal inconceivable generation of the person of the Son, by the person of the Father, in the sameness of the divine essence, consubstantial, co-equal, and co-eternal with the Father," is included in the name *Son of God.*

But I am persuaded this can never be the sense of this name in those several texts before cited: They can never signify, that it is necessary to salvation to believe Christ to be the "eternal Son of God as a distinct person in the same divine essence, proceeding from the Father by such an eternal and incomprehensible generation." For,

1. If this be ever so true, yet it is confessed to be inconceivable. Now, if it be so very inconceivable, so mysterious and sublime a doctrine, then I do not think the gracious God would put such a difficult test upon the faith of young disciples, poor illiterate men and women, in the very beginning of the gospel, and exclude them from heaven for not believing it.

2. Nor indeed is this eternal generation and consubstantial sonship clearly enough revealed in Scripture for us to make it a fundamental article in any age, and to damn all who do not receive it. I cannot see evidence enough in the word of God to make the salvation of all mankind, the poor and the ignorant, the labouring men and the children, even in such a day of knowledge as this is, to depend on such a doctrine, which the most learned and pious Christians in all ages have confessed to be attended with so many difficulties, which, after the labour and study of near 1400 years, is so inconceivable in itself, and was at first so obscurely revealed; much less can I suppose this notion of the Son of God could be made a necessary and fundamental article in those dawnings of the gospel-day. Besides,

3. There have been some very pious and learned men, in several ages, who have acknowledged Christ's true godhead, and yet have supposed that the sonship of Christ referred rather to his human nature, or to his office of Messiah, than to such an eternal generation and consubstantial sonship: And there are some in our age who have given sufficient proofs of their good learning and sincere piety, who heartily believe the eternal godhead of Christ, and yet doubt or disbelieve this eternal generation and derivation of his person, as God, and I will never pronounce an anathema upon them.

Objection I. But some will say, "If the name *Son of God* doth not signify eternal generation by the Father in the sameness of the divine essence or substance, yet surely it must at least import Christ's true and eternal godhead."

Answer I. This name, *son* and *sons of God*, is often used in the Bible, and applied variously to men and to angels, as well as to Christ: But it is never used

in any one place to signify true and eternal godhead that I can find, unless it be in those very places which are at present under debate. And therefore when Christ is called eminently and absolutely *the Son of God*, the meaning of it does not necessarily rise higher than that he is the most eminent of all other beings, men or angels, that are called sons of God, without a certain determination whether he be true God, or no, by the mere use of that name.

Answer II. This name, *Son of God*, cannot necessarily signify his true godhead any otherwise than by supposing it primarily to signify his co-essential sonship, or that he is a Son of the same nature and essence with the Father, even as a son among men has the same specifical essence with his father, and then consequentially that the Son of God is true God, because his Father is so. Now, we have before proved, that this name cannot necessarily signify his co-essential or consubstantial sonship, and therefore it cannot necessarily signify his true godhead.

Answer III. It is evident from some parts of the conduct of Peter and other disciples, during the life of Christ on earth, that they did not heartily believe they had the true and eternal God among them, and that their Master was the true and eternal God, as when they rebuked him, when they questioned his knowledge in some things, when they wondered, and were so astonished at his working miracles, &c. as I shall shew hereafter: Yet it is plain that they then believed him to be the Son of God; for this was made necessary to their salvation in that day, and they professed this belief roundly, that he was the Son of God. Therefore this name does not certainly declare his divine nature.

Objection II. It will be said then, how comes it to pass, that when the high-priest asked our Saviour, *Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed? And Jesus* answered, *I am*, Mark xiv. 61, 62; in *verse* 64, he charges our Saviour with blasphemy, if his calling himself the Son of God did not imply his true godhead?

Answer. It is evident that the design of the wicked Jews was to fix the highest and most criminal charge they could against him: But there was no sufficient foundation for this charge, which our Saviour, in another place, fully proves, *John* x. 33, 34, as I have shewn elsewhere, in what follows. Thus it appears, that though it be fully agreed that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, has true godhead belonging to him, because divine names and titles are given him, yet this name, *Son of God*, does not necessarily and certainly discover or imply it. Thus much for the first supposed sense of this name.

II. Some may suppose the name, *Son of God*, relates to his human soul, and signifies the glorious peculiar derivation of it from God the Father before the creation of the world, and that in this sense he is called *the first-born of every creature*, and *the beginning of the creation of God;* Col. i. 15, and Rev. iii. 14.

Answer. Though I am very much inclined to believe that Christ is in this sense the Son of God, and that his human soul had such a glorious derivation from the Father before the creation of the world, and that he is *the first-born of every creature*, and *the beginning of the creation of God*, as in *Col.* i. 15, and that his human soul had as noble a pre-eminence above other souls in its origin, as his human body had a pre-eminence above other bodies, that so *in all things he might have the pre-eminence*, Col. i. 18; yet I cannot think this precise idea is the very thing designed in those texts of Scripture, wherein our salvation is made to depend on the belief of Christ being the Son of God; for,

1. Though the apostles Paul and John, and perhaps the rest of them, arrived at this complete idea of his glorious pre-existent human soul in due time, yet it doth not appear evidently that the disciples had all attained such an idea so soon as they believed that he was the Son of God, in a sufficient manner for their attaining the favour of God and a state of salvation.*

2. There have been thousands of Christians, in several ages of the church, who have been saved, and yet have not entertained this opinion concerning the soul of Christ, that it had a being before the world was created, and that it was "the first-born of all the creatures of God;" and therefore this cannot be the sense of that title in those texts.

III. I say therefore, in the third place, that this title, *Son of God*, is given to Christ, sometimes upon account of his incarnation and miraculous birth. Luke i. 31, 32, *Thou shalt bring forth a Son, and shalt call his name Jesus: He shall be great, and shall be called* THE SON OF THE HIGHEST; ver. 35, *The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing that shall be born of thee, shall be called* THE SON OF GOD.

Though God be the father of all men by creation, and the father of all the saints by a new creation or regeneration, yet in a more especial manner he is the Father of the blessed Jesus; because his body was so formed or begotten by him, in so peculiar a manner, as no other man ever was.

But this cannot be the chief meaning of the name, *Son of God*, in the texts before cited: For surely the belief that the man Christ Jesus was begotten of God, and born of a virgin, without an earthly father, was not made the term of salvation any where that we can find in the New Testament. It is not this sort of sonship that Christ and the apostles lay so great a stress on, nor make the matter of their sermons, and the labour of their arguments, to convince the world of it in order to their salvation. This circumstance of his extraordinary birth, doth not seem to have any such special connection with the redemption and salvation of men, as to have it made the peculiar matter of their faith, and the very article on which their salvation was to depend.

Doubtless many a poor creature might become a true believer in Christ when he was upon earth, by the sight of his miracles, and hearing his doctrine, without the knowledge of this particular circumstance of his incarnation or birth; and doubtless many a one was converted by the apostles without any notice of this part of the history of Christ; for we scarce find so much as the mention of it in their preaching or writings. This therefore cannot be the meaning of this name, in those Scriptures.

IV. In the fourth place, Christ may be sometimes called *the Son of God*, because of his resurrection from the dead, and his exaltation to universal dominion, by the peculiar favour and power of God. In this sense Christ is said to be "begotten of God," when he is raised from the dead; Acts xiii. 32, 33, *And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the*

* I will not deny but that one considerable ground on which Christ was called *the Son of God*, at first, and for which he eminently merited that name, was the dignity of his human soul, both in the native excellencies of it, and in the original and early generation, or peculiar way of creation of it before all other creatures: But as the belief of his being the Son of God is made a requisite to salvation, I suppose the idea of that title, *Son of God*, arises no higher than to mean in general some glorious relation to God, partly natural, and partly economical, without a precise determination how far this relation reached, as will appear more particularly afterward.

same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second Psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee. And it is upon this account that he is called *the first-begotten of the dead,* Rev. i. 5, and *the first-born from the dead,* Col. i. 18; though the Greek word is in both places the same, *viz,* πρωτότοκος ἐκ τῶν νεκρῶν, because he was raised immediately by God himself from the earth into eternal life.

His exaltation to the kingdom, as *heir of all things,* is supposed to be a further ground of this title: Heb. i. 2, *His Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things.* Psalm lxxxix. 27, *I will make him my first-born, higher than the kings of the earth.* And some divines are ready to think, it is in this sense he is called *the first-born of every creature,* Col. i. 15, because he is Heir and Lord of all the creation. And some join his exaltation together with his resurrection in that prophecy, Psalm ii. 7, *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee;* because it is the chief sense in which the words of the second or of the eighty-ninth *Psalms,* now cited, could literally be applied to David in the day of his being raised from the earth and obscurity, unto a throne: Now David, in this his exaltation to the kingdom of Israel, was a type of Christ, and was said to be the Son of God, begotten that day, as a proper type and figure of our blessed Saviour.

But whatever may be the prophetical sense of those words of the Psalmist, it is certain that the name, *Son of God,* cannot directly and chiefly signify his resurrection and future exaltation in all those places of the gospel, where the belief of it is made the term of salvation.

1. Because he is very often called *the Son of God,* long before his death, resurrection, and exaltation, to describe the person who was to be thus raised and exalted. He is called by the apostle John, *the only begotten of the Father,* who lay *in the bosom of the Father,* John i. 14, 18; and Paul calls him "God's own Son, who was delivered up to death for us," *Rom.* viii. 32, as a name that belonged to him long before his death, or indeed before his birth into this world: For when he was first sent into the world he was then *the Son of God,* John iii. 16, 17, and xi. 27, and as such he was *appointed heir of all things,* Heb. i. 2.

2. This title, *the Son of God,* in those texts of the gospel, does not depend upon his resurrection and exaltation, because the Jews were required to believe him to be the Son of God long before his death and resurrection. Nor did Christ himself in plain language openly and publicly preach his own death and resurrection to the multitudes. Therefore the belief of Christ to be the Son of God, in this sense of the words, could not in his life-time be made necessary to salvation.

3. And let it be noted further, that at this time even the apostles themselves, who were true believers in the Son of God, did not know that he was to die and to rise again; for *Peter began to rebuke him,* when he spake of his own dying, *Mark* viii. 32; and they knew not *what the rising from the dead should mean,* Mark ix. 10; yet they all believed him to be the Son of God.

4. I might add, that it is abundantly evident from Scripture that he was the Son of God, before he died or rose again, because he was only proclaimed or declared to be his Son by his resurrection and exaltation: The apostle Paul explains it thus, *Rom.* i. 4, "He was declared to be the Son of God with power, by his resurrection from the dead."

Nor is it any wonder that Christ in some Scriptures should be represented as born or begotten of God at his resurrection, since it is the way of the sacred writers sometimes to represent a thing to be transacted or done in that day when it is published or proclaimed; and upon this account Christ may be said to be born or to be begotten, or to be made the first-born of God, in the day of his resurrection and exaltation, because he was then proclaimed and published to be the Son of God; even as a king may be said to be made that day when he is proclaimed or crowned.

V. The last sense in which Christ is called *the Son of God*, is to signify that "glorious person who was appointed to be the Messiah, the anointed Saviour, who was derived from God, and did bear some very near and extraordinary relation to God above all other persons; and therefore he is called *his Son, his own Son, his only begotten Son, his beloved Son.*" And since the several other senses cannot be admitted to be the precise idea and common meaning of the name, *Son of God*, in the New Testament, I take this to be the true idea of it, as it is generally used in the New Testament, and especially in those Scriptures where the belief or profession of it is made necessary in order to the salvation of men, in the writings of the apostles.

It includes some special and glorious relation to God; but whether that relation belongs to his flesh, or his human soul, or his divine nature, or to all these, is not so directly determined in those texts, because the chief design of them is but to point out the person and character of the Messiah.

Now let us consider the reasons to prove this to be the true sense of the name.

That the name, *Son of God*, doth originally respect the glory and excellency of his person, and his near relation and resemblance to God, appears from the use of the word *Son* and *Son of God* in other places of Scripture.

Son, or *daughter*, or *child*, in the hebrew tongue, implies eminently two things: 1. It notes some derivation of one thing from another. Men are frequently called *sons of men*. Israelites are called *the sons* or *children of Israel*. So sparks are called *the sons of the burning coal*, Job v. 7; to signify the derivation of one from the other.

2. It is also an idiom of the hebrew language, and a peculiar way of speaking much in use among the Jews, to call one person the son of any other thing or person whose quality and likeness he bears. So wicked men are called *the sons of Belial*, or wickedness, 2 *Sam.* xxiii. 6. So young men that were instructed and prepared for the gift of prophecy, are called *the sons of the prophets*, 2 Kings ii. 3, 5, 7. Proud men are named *the children of pride*, Job xli. 34. *Child of the devil*, signifies a very wicked man, one akin to the devil in malice and subtilty, &c. *Acts* xiii. 10. So the word *sons of God*, signifies persons who in a peculiar manner were derived from God, and had some resemblance of him.

Adam was called *the son of God*, Luke iii. 38, because he was formed in the image of God, and in an immediate manner derived his being from God without human generation.

Angels are called *sons of God*, Job i. 6, and ii. 1, and xxxviii. 7, because they are glorious and excellent beings, with spiritual powers and perfections, in some measure like to God, and were the chief rank of his creatures, and not derived from each other by successive generations, but all created immediately by God himself.

Saints are called *sons of God*, in *John* i. 12, and many other places, both because they are like God, or "created anew after his image, in knowledge, righteousness, and

holiness," *Col.* iii. 10. *Ephes*, iv. 24; and because they are said to be "new created, or begotten and born of God," *John* i. 13, and 1 *John* v. 1.

Magistrates are called *gods*, and *sons of the Most High*, Psalm lxxxii. 6, partly to denote that they are raised by God to that dignity; so David, in the letter and type, was "the son of God," *Psalm* ii. 7, and was made God's *first-born*, Psalm lxxxix. 26, 27, as a type of Christ; and partly also to denote that in their authority and majesty they resemble God the supreme magistrate and ruler.

The Son of God who was with the three children in the fiery furnace, *Dan.* iii. 25, is so called, to signify a glorious and excellent being, that had something divine or god-like in him; for this is the expression of Nebuchadnezzar, who is not supposed to know any thing of Christ, or the Messiah.

Now it is evident that our Lord Jesus Christ is the Son of God, in a sense superior to men and angels, for he is called "God's own Son," *Rom.* viii. 32; his *only begotten Son*, John i. 14, 18; and his *first-born, the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature, &c.* Col. i. 15, 18; *the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person;—made so much better than the angels, and hath obtained a more excellent name than they*, Heb. i. 3, 4: "For in all things he must have the pre-eminence," *Col.* i. 18. These scriptural expressions plainly imply both derivation and resemblance.

Yet here I ask leave to insert one caution, and that is, though it is sufficiently manifest from the New Testament, and especially from *Heb.* i. that Christ is the Son of God, in a sense far superior to angels, yet I am in doubt whether the disciples at first could have such an idea of his superiority to all angels: Perhaps their idea of the Son of God arose no higher at first than to suppose him superior to all their prophets and kings, who were called *sons of God*, though afterwards it grew up to an idea superior to all the angels of God.

But let us raise this idea of the name as high as we can suppose any of the disciples had attained before the death of Christ, or as high as could be requisite in order to salvation in that day, and I think it must be granted that this name, *Son of God*, so far as it denotes the nature of Christ distinct from his offices, can necessarily be construed to rise no higher than to denote some peculiar and glorious likeness to God, some more near and excellent relation to God the Father, or some special derivation from him, some divine character more eminent than belongs to men or angels when they are called the *sons of God*, without any precise determination wherein this peculiar relation to God consisted.

Now to proceed:

This glory and excellency of the person of Christ, which is originally denoted by the name *Son of God*, is part of his qualification for the office of the Messiah, part of the foundation of his office, and what made him a proper person to undertake, sustain, and fulfil it.

Yet this excellency of his person, this likeness and nearness to God, is not the complete sense and meaning of the word *Son of God*, in those fore-cited texts of the gospel; but it includes also a designation to his office, *viz.* "that glorious person, of extraordinary nearness and likeness to God, who was ordained to be the Saviour of men:" And though the name, *Son of God*, signifies and includes both these, yet sometimes the Scripture, in using this name, seems to have a more special regard to the

excellency of his person, and sometimes to his office, and perhaps for this reason, that a belief of his sonship in one of those senses, but especially the latter, in that day, might be a sufficient ground for the faith and hope of sinners.

1. It may seem to have some special regard to the excellency of his person, where it is joined by way of exposition to the word *Messiah* or *Christ*, as a further description of the person who sustained that office; as in these Scriptures, *viz. Matt.* xxvi. 63, the high-priest adjured Jesus to a confession, and said, *Tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God?* Matt. xvi. 16, *Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ,* or Messiah, *the Son of the living God. John* xi. 27, Martha confessed, *Lord, I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God.* Which expressions mean thus much, "Thou art the Christ, or Messiah, that glorious person of peculiar relation to God who was ordained to this office."

It seems also to signify more especially the excellency of his person in those Scriptures, where he is called God's *own Son*, God's *only Son*, God's *only-begotten Son*, his *beloved Son*, his *first-born*, *&c.* because these are words of relation and peculiar endearment, and we cannot well say the "only-begotten Messiah," the "first-born Messiah."

2. Yet there are many other places wherein the name, *Son of God*, seems to have a more special regard to his office as the appointed Saviour, though it is inclusive also of the peculiar excellency of his person, which makes him fit for his office: John x. 36, *Say ye of him whom the Father hath sanctified and sent, Thou blasphemest, because I said, I am the Son of God?* His being thus sanctified and sent by the Father is sufficient to give this name.

This is evident also, where the word *Christ* or *Messiah* is not joined with it, and yet the design of the expression seems to be entirely the same as if the word *Christ* or *Messiah* had been used there; as, *John* i. 34, John the Baptist *saw and bare* witness *that this is the Son of God;* that is, "this is the great promised Saviour." So *verse* 49, Nathanael said, *Rabbi, thou art the Son of God, thou art the king of Israel;* that is, "thou art the Messiah, the king." So *John* ix. 35, Jesus asked the blind man that was healed, *Dost thou believe on the Son of God?* that is, "dost thou believe on the Messiah, the appointed Saviour?" For as such he was the proper object of belief. So 1 John iv. 15, *Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God;* that is, "he that confesses him to be the glorious appointed Messiah, and receives him as such, he dwelleth in or with God." The same is the sense of that word, 1 John v. 5, *Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God;* that is, the Messiah. And verse 20, *We know that the Son of God is come;* that is, "the glorious person who was ordained to be the Messiah, is come into the world."

As in these places where the word *Christ* or *Messiah* is not mentioned, *Son of God* signifies more directly the Messiah or appointed Saviour, so there are other places wherein the word *Christ* is joined with it, where *Son of God* hath the same signification, and intends chiefly the office of the Messiah or Saviour; because in those texts the word *Christ* doth not properly signify a character or office, but the proper name or surname of the man Jesus, who was generally so called after his resurrection.* The

* This is a common thing in our nation and language, where the surname of a man and his family is *Smith, Taylor, Clark, Dyer, Steward, &c.* being drawn originally from the trade, office, or employment, which perhaps the first of the family enjoyed or practised.

eunuch's confession must have this sense, Acts viii. 37, *I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God;* that is, "this man, named Jesus Christ, is the promised and appointed Saviour."

And in this same sense, St. Paul *preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God,* Acts ix. 20; that is, "that the man Jesus Christ is the promised Saviour." For the grand question of that day was not whether Jesus were eternally begotten of the Father; nor whether he was the true and eternal God himself; nor whether he were formed in an extraordinary and miraculous manner as to his soul or his body; but whether he was the promised Messiah and Saviour of the world?

And if we consult the writings of the New Testament, especially the gospel and epistles of St. John, we shall find the name *Son of God,* and the name *Christ,* which in Hebrew is *Messiah,* used very promiscuously for one another, and sometimes with a design to explain each other, and both to denote the great promised Redeemer, the Saviour of the word. This will appear if we read the following verses: *John* xi. 27, Martha confesses, *I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world.* 1 John iv. 14, 15, *And we have seen and do testify, that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world. Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God.* 1 John v. 1, *Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God.* And a little after, *Whatsoever is born of God, overcometh the world.* And then, *Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?* 1 John ii. 22, 23, *Who is a liar, but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is anti-christ that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father.* And that awful text, *John* viii. 24, is certainly to be interpreted the same way, *If ye believe not that* I AM HE, *ye shall die in your sins;* that is, as Christ himself explains it in the next verse, that I am *the same that I said unto you from the beginning;* that is, the *Christ,* the *Messiah,* the *Son of God,* the *Saviour of the world.* Nor is the absence of the word HE in the Greek any bar to this interpretation, for the expression is the same, *John* iv. 29, ἐγώ εἰμι, and *John* ix. 37, ἐκεῖνός ἐστι, where we are sure that Christ means that he is the Messiah.

It is well known that the Jews generally, and very justly, believed the person who was to be their Messiah and Saviour, was to bear some very extraordinary relation to God, and to be his Son in a sublime and uncommon way and manner, though what particular sort of sonship it was, they could have but very dark and confused ideas; yet they used the word *Son of God* emphatically to denote this glorious person: And the common purpose for which they used it, was to signify this great promised deliverer.

Now it is very easy to account for this, *viz.* that the Son of God, which originally signifies "a glorious person near akin to God," might in common use come to signify his office, or the appointed king and saviour of his people, just as the name *Cæsar* was originally the surname of a family, but afterwards came to signify an office, and to denote the emperor; and perhaps the same might be said of the name *Abimelech,* king of Philistia, or *Pharaoh,* king of Egypt. So the word *Israel* at first was a name given to Jacob, thence it was derived to signify all the jewish family or nation, and afterwards it came to signify the character of that family, *viz.* the *church of God;* and so it is used in Gal. vi. 16, *Peace be on—the Israel of God.*

Thus I have gone over the several senses of the name *Son of God,* and there is the

greatest reason to believe that it most usually and directly signifies that person who has in general some peculiar and sublime relation and likeness to God, and is appointed to be the Messiah or Saviour of men.

SECTION II.

OTHER ARGUMENTS TO CONFIRM THIS SENSE OF THE NAME "SON OF GOD."

THE next argument I shall produce for this sense of the name, is this: It is most reasonable to suppose that *Son of God* signifies the office of the Messiah, together with a connotation of his peculiar relation to God, or his being born of God in some eminent and transcendent manner; because the other name of Christ, *Son of man*, signifies the same office of the Messiah, together with a connotation of his being born of mankind, or his relation to man in some way of eminence. That the name *Son of man*, may properly denote the Messiah, there are some hints given in the Old Testament. I will mention four places:

I. The very first promise of the Messiah calls him "the seed of the woman," who was appointed to "break the head of the serpent," *Gen.* iii. 15; that is, one derived from mankind, or a son of man; which is interpreted, 1 John iii. 8, *The Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.* The Messiah was to be the Son of God and the Son of man, to undertake this glorious service.

II. See Psalm viii. 4, *What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the Son of man, that thou visitest him? Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, &c.* which is interpreted concerning Jesus the promised Messiah, *Heb.* ii. 9; and so the literal and typical sense of the Psalmist is this: "What is the first Adam, with all his seed, that thou art mindful of him? Or what is the second Adam, that thou visitest him? &c. since he is made a little lower than the angels, by his coming into the flesh, and becoming a second Adam."

III. Read Psalm lxxx. 17, *Let thy hand be upon the man of thy right-hand, upon the Son of man whom thou madest strong for thyself.* Whether this refers to the hard work of atonement, which the hand of God would lay upon him, or whether it means the hand of God shall be with him, to support and establish him in his kingdom, may be doubted. Yet it is generally agreed, that the person here designed is the promised Messiah, that holy, that mighty one, upon whom God devolved the care of our salvation, *Psalm* lxxxix. 19, when he says, *I have laid help upon one that is mighty, I have exalted one chosen out of the people;* that is, "one who is to be eminently the Son of man, chosen out of mankind."

IV. Look into Dan. vii. 13, 14, *I saw in the night visions, and behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days—and there was given to him dominion and glory, and a kingdom, &c.* which represents in prophecy, Christ's ascension to heaven in the clouds, and his receiving the kingdom from the hands of the Father.

I grant, that in some of these ancient texts, the design of Scripture is to represent this, that the promised Messiah was to have the nature, form, and fashion of a man, but still his character as Messiah is also included or declared in the same text. And this

is particularly remarkable in this verse of Daniel, which, as Doctor Sykes has abundantly shewn, in his *Essay on the Truth of the Christian Religion*, is always supposed to be in view wheresoever this title is given to Christ in the New Testament.

This is the name indeed, whereby Christ most frequently speaks of himself in the New Testament; and, as some have remarked, that as the sacred writers generally call him *the Son of God*, to express his sublime relation to the Father, so he generally calls himself *the Son of man*, to signify his condescending relation to mankind.

It may be said concerning this name, *Son of man*, as is said before concerning the name *Son of God*, viz. As there are some few places where *the Son of God* chiefly denotes his sublime relation to God, distinct from his office; so there may be a place or two where *the Son of man* chiefly signifies Christ's relation to human nature, and his derivation from mankind, distinct from his office.—Yet as the most general sense of the word, *Son of God*, is to denote that eminent, that peculiar Son of God, who was to be the Messiah, or Saviour; so the most general sense of the word, *Son of man*, is to denote that eminent and peculiar Son of man, who was the seed of the woman, and was appointed to that office of a Saviour.

First, I shall mention one text, for I can think of but one in the New Testament, where *the Son of man* may be supposed chiefly or only to signify Christ's relation to mankind, without including his office or referring to it: Matt. xvi. 13, *Whom do men say that I, the Son of man, am?* that is, "Whom do men say that I, Jesus, am, who appear in the common form of mankind?" And *verse* 16, Peter gives his opinion, *Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God;* that is, "Thou art the Messiah, who hast a sublime and glorious relation to God, who art by way of eminence God's own Son."

Yet even this text may be also explained so as to include the Messiahship, or the office of Christ thus, "Whom do men say that I am? What do men think concerning me, who am indeed the great Son of man, the Messiah who was to come? What do they think of my person, who am the Messiah by office?"

But in the next place, let it be observed, that there are a multitude of Scriptures wherein this word is plainly and certainly used to signify that eminent Son of man, who is the promised Messiah. I shall mention only these four, wherein it is evident that the Scripture hath chief respect to his office; and where the mere signification of his human nature cannot answer the end and design of the text.

I. Mark ix. 12, *Elias verily cometh first, and restoreth all things, &c. And it is written of the Son of man, that he must suffer many things, and be set at nought;* which refers to the prophecies of Isaiah, David, and Daniel, concerning the Messiah; *Isaiah* liii. *Dan.* ix. and *Psalm* xxii.

II. Luke xvii. 22, 23, *The days will come, when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and ye shall not see it; and they shall say to you, See here, or See there: Go not after them, nor follow them.* Which is parallel to Matt. xxiv. 23, *If any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not; for there shall arise false Christs, &c.* Then it follows, both in Luke and Matthew, *As the lightning cometh, &c. so shall the coming of the Son of man be;* and *as it was in the days of Noah;* and Luke adds also, *in the days of Lot; thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed;* that is, "when Jesus shall appear as the Messiah for the conversion of the gentiles, or for the destruction of the Jews, or for the final judgment of the world."

III. John v. 26, 27, *As the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to*

have life in himself; and hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man: That is, "because he is the Messiah;" therefore, in order to sustain and fulfil the character of Messiah, it was necessary that he should have power to give life to the dead, and to execute judgment on the world.

IV. John xii. 34, *The people answered him, We have heard out of the law, that Christ*, or the Messiah, *abideth for ever: And how sayest thou, The Son of man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of man?* It is as much as if the people had said, "We know of no Son of man besides that Messiah, or the Christ, who is to have a glorious kingdom, and abide for ever: What other Son of man is there, or can there be, that must be lifted up or put to death? Is there any other Christ or Messiah, besides him who is to abide for ever?"

I might cite several Scriptures more to this purpose, but these are sufficient to shew, that as the Messiah is sometimes called *the Son of man*, to signify his office, with a connotation of his relation to mankind, and being in an eminent sense "the seed of the woman," or the Son of man, the chief of all the sons of men; so it is exceeding probable that he is also called *the Son of God*, to signify the same office, and withal to shew his sublime relation to God, or his being in a peculiar and transcendent manner *the Son*, by way of absolute eminence, above all men or angels who are sons of God; even his first-born, his only-begotten Son.

Objection. But if it be allowed, that there are any places of Scripture where the name *Son of man* denotes the human nature of Christ, or that he was really and truly man; why may not the name *Son of God* as well signify his divine nature, and denote that he is true and real God?

To which I answer, that the case is widely different; for the name *Son of man* is never applied to any person who is not true and real man; and the Scripture applying it absolutely and eminently to Christ, shews him to be the chief of the sons of men: But the name *Son of God* is applied often in the Old Testament and in the New, both to angels and to men, who are called *the sons of God*, and yet they are not true and real God; and therefore when this name is given absolutely and eminently to Christ, it can necessarily be construed to signify no more, than the most eminent and chief of all who are called the sons of God, or one who is above them all, in character and office.

It may be observed also, that the name *son of man*, or *sons of men*, is given sometimes to any of the children of Adam or the race of mankind, and at other times to some eminent person among men, as Ezekiel the prophet is often spoken to, *Thou son of man;* but the name is much more abundantly attributed to our blessed Saviour, as he is the most eminent of all that ever had that appellation given them.

I acknowledge it is a great truth, that this glorious person the Messiah hath two distinct natures united in him, even the nature of God and the nature of man: And that Christ is true God and true man. But when he calls himself *Son of God* and *Son of man*, surely an eternal and consubstantial sonship of Christ, or even his eternal deity united to man, seems more than could be certainly collected from these names in that day, and more than Christ himself directly designed by the use of those words.

The last argument that I shall mention to prove that the name *Son of God* denotes the character of the Messiah, including also his divine, original, and sublime relation to

God, which renders him an all-sufficient Saviour, is this, that salvation is annexed to the belief of Jesus being the Son of God, in several texts which I have cited at the beginning of this discourse: This sonship therefore must necessarily signify and carry with it some ideas or characters, that are directly suited to the sinful and miserable state of mankind, and that render him a proper object for their desire, dependence, and hope.

Now it is not the mere belief of his having a divine nature, nor of an eternal generation by God the Father, nor of his having a most glorious human soul, nor a miraculous birth, nor a resurrection from the dead, that renders him so directly suitable to the state and case of convinced sinners, and fit for the proper exercises of their hope and dependence, as the various offices and characters which he sustains as the Messiah, the Saviour of mankind, together with his all-sufficient capacity to fulfil those offices.

A poor convinced perishing sinner beholds him as a glorious person near to God, appointed to be a prophet to enlighten his darkness, a priest to atone for his sins and intercede for him, a king to rule and influence and defend him against all the powers of sin and hell, and all-sufficient for these sacred purposes: And thence I infer, that a divine person who is the promised Messiah, the all-sufficient Saviour, is the most natural and probable sense of this title, *the Son of God*, in all those places of Scripture where Christ is proposed to our faith under this name; however some of the other senses may be more remotely and indeterminately included therein. And though the deity of Christ is not directly signified by this name, yet by a comparison of it with other places of Scripture, I think it may certainly be deduced by just consequences; for it is sufficiently manifest to us, who have the whole New Testament to compare with the Old, that the Messiah must be the true God, or that godhead must be united to human nature, to make up the complete person and character of the Messiah.

SECTION III.

OBJECTIONS AGAINST THIS SENSE OF THE NAME ANSWERED.

OBJECTION I. The word *son*, among men, properly signifies one of the same nature with the Father; and therefore *Son of God*, when it is applied to Christ, must signify one of the same nature with God the Father, that is, one who is true and eternal God; and it has been generally so taken in this controversy by our divines. Now this sense implies much more than a mere likeness to God, or a derivation from him, or deputation to an office.

Answer I. The word *son*, taken in its common senses and uses among men, may be applied to several ideas, *viz.* a derivation from the father, a likeness to, or imitation of the father, a subordination, or some sort of inferior relation to the father, or a being of the same species, kind, or nature with the father, and an individual being distinct from the father.

Now it is plain that when human words and similes are used to represent divine things, there is no necessity that those words should include all their original ideas, nor indeed is it possible: It is enough to support the analogy, if but one or two of the same ideas are denoted by the use of the same word. Why may we not then suppose the name *Son of God*, when applied to Christ, may signify his peculiar derivation from the Father as to his soul, or as to his body, or his subordinate character in his mission by the Father, or his being appointed by the Father to be his vicegerent in the kingdom,

or his likeness to the Father in his natural qualifications and powers, or in his kingly office, together with his being another individual distinct from the Father? Why may not one or two of these ideas, and much more all of them, be sufficient to account for the use of this name, *Son of God*, without making it necessary that the word *sonship* in this place must include a sameness of nature?

Besides, it is evident that the word *son of God* is applied to angels, *Job* i. 6, and to men, *Phil.* ii. 15. 1 *John* iii. 1, 2; and even the term of *begotten son* is applied to men, 1 *John* v. 1. Yet neither men nor angels are of the same kind or nature with God their Father; and in these instances it is impossible that the idea of sameness of kind or nature should be included.

Answer II. The word *son*, in the language of men, wheresoever it means a sameness of nature, it always means the same specific nature, or a nature of the same kind and species; but it never means the same individual nature, for it always denotes a distinct individual being. Therefore, in order to keep this part of the idea of sonship, and to maintain the parallel in this point, if we will have *the Son of God* to signify one of the same nature with the Father, it must mean one of the same specific nature, that is, a distinct individual being of the same kind with the Father; and thus we shall be in danger of making two gods.* But it is plain, that in order to support the analogy of the name *son*, we can never make the word *Son of God* to signify one of the same individual nature or essence, because it never signifies so in the language of men; and therefore there is no necessity that it should signify one of the same nature in any sense when applied to Christ.

Answer III. There are many places of Scripture wherein Christ is called *the Son of God*, and *the Son* absolutely, and where God is said to be his *Father*, wherein we cannot suppose the godhead of Christ is or can be designed in the most just and natural interpretation of the text; such are most of these which follow, *viz. John* v. 18, 19, when the Jews had made a strange inference, and charged Christ with "making himself equal to God, because he called God his Father," he answered, *Verily, verily I say unto you, the Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do, &c.* This is not an expression which represents the Son as the true and eternal God, or that grants their inference; for it is plain that this expression represents him under a degree of impotence and dependence, that he could do nothing of himself. Nay this contradicts their inference, and denies his equality with God, rather than confirms or allows it.

The sense of this expression may be learned from John viii. 38, *I speak that which I have seen with my Father, and ye do that which ye have seen with your father.* Verse 44, *Ye are of your father, the devil, &c.* Now it is plain that the Jews had never seen the devil do those things which they did, but it signifies only that by the devil's influence and direction they practised evil actions: And so also, that Christ doth all by God's influence and direction, is the plain meaning of Christ's speaking or doing what he has seen with his Father.

Nor will the following words destroy this interpretation: *What things soever the*

* That it cannot mean one of the same specific nature, and that Christ is not another individual spirit specifically the same with the Father, I have proved at large in other places: For it belongs to the very nature of the Father to be self-existent and underived, and it belongs as much to the nature of a Son not to be self-existent, but to be derived: therefore their natures cannot be specifically the same. A nature which is not self-existent and self-sufficient, nor could exist but by derivation, is not the same specific nature with that which is self-sufficient and self-existent, and which cannot be derived.

Father doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise; that is, "whatsoever things the Father contrives and appoints, the Son executes and performs, as commissioned by the Father, or the Son performs them by the Father's influence."

Then it proceeds, verse 20, *The Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth, and he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel.* Hence it follows that the Father had not then shewn to the Son these "greater works," or given him commission and power for the performance of them. But this can never be said concerning the divine nature of Christ, which can receive and learn nothing new.

And though there are some expressions in that paragraph of Scripture, down to the 30th verse, which seem superior to the character of any mere creature, and which would have been hardly applied to Christ and man, if not united to godhead; yet Christ, considered as the Son of God throughout that paragraph, is represented as dependent on the Father for all, and receiving all from the Father, which is hardly consistent with the idea of supreme godhead, if that were included in sonship.

Wheresoever Christ calls God *his Father*, he himself stands under the special character of *a Son*. Now, *John* v. 30, when he says, *I can of mine ownself do nothing—I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me;* and chap. vi. 38, *I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me;* that is, *the Father*, as verse 39; this does not sound like the language of godhead, which is supreme and independent, and can do all things of itself, and by its own will.

John xiv. 28, *My Father is greater than I.* It is hardly to be supposed that Christ here intends to speak of his divine nature. The expression itself, as well as the context, would lead one to think that Christ, considered as a Son, is not here spoken of as the true and eternal God, who is the greatest of beings, and can acknowledge no greater than himself. John xiv. 31, *As the Father gave me commandment, even so I do.* This does not seem to be the language of supreme godhead, which receives no commandments from another. John xvii. 5, *Father, glorify me with thine ownself, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.* Surely Christ as God does not offer up prayers to the Father, and much less could he pray for the restoration of a glory which his divine nature once had, of which he seems divested at present. All this is hardly consistent with supreme deity belonging to his sonship, that is, either to be divested of glory, or to pray for the restoration of it.

John xx. 17, Christ says, *I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God.* So 2 *Cor.* xi. 31, and 1 *Peter* i. 3, the Father is called *the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.* Now the Father cannot properly be the God of the deity of Christ, that is, his Creator, his absolute governor, and his object of worship, which is the proper sense of *my God* in all other Scriptures. Nor is there any sufficient reason then why we should construe the words *my Father*, as relating to the deity of Christ, since the words *my God* cannot be so construed, and since both these titles seem so intimately connected and referring to one and the same subject.

Mark xiii. 32, "Of that day and hour knoweth not the Son, but the Father." I confess it may be said, in that paragraph he is called *the Son of man*, verse 26, yet it must be granted that the more natural sense of the words is, "Of that hour knoweth

not the Son of God, but only God the Father." This text does so plainly shew Christ's ignorance of the day of judgment as he is the Son, that though it be granted the divine nature of Christ knows the day of judgment, yet as a Son he does not: Therefore as a Son he hath not a divine nature, or true godhead.

John iii. 35, *The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hands.* Verse 34, *God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him.* All this implies an inferiority and dependency. As a Son he receives all from another, which godhead cannot do.

Mark xv. 39, when the centurion, or captain, saw the miracles at the death of Christ, he cried out, *Truly this man was the Son of God.* He cannot be supposed to mean that this man was the true and eternal God, but only that he was a great and glorious person, like God, or some way related to God: Or he was the person whom the Jews expected for their Messiah. This Roman captain could not imagine Christ to be God himself.

1 Cor. xv. 28, *Then shall the Son also himself be subject to him that has put all things under him, that God may be all in all.* This is a character of too much inferiority for true godhead. The argument stands thus: If the Son of God be true God, considered as a Son, then he is originally and necessarily Lord of all, and then it must be said it is by his own voluntary condescension that he is so far depressed and humbled by the economy, as to become the Father's deputy and vicegerent; and when that economy ceases, he is of course exalted to his equality with the Father, and to his essential and natural lordship over all. But the representation of St. Paul is just the contrary: In many parts of his writings, particularly *Phil.* ii. he shews us, that the Son of God is not depressed but exalted by the economy to the kingdom. And he tells us in this text, that when the Son gives up this economical kingdom, he comes again into subjection; "then shall the Son himself be subject to the Father;" which plainly shews, that, considered as a Son, he is naturally subject to the Father, and that at the end of this economical exaltation he shall return to his natural subjection, and shall be so for ever, when God appears all in all. This is most evidently the meaning of the great apostle.

This text will not prove that Christ is not God, for he is so by personal union to the divine nature, he is *God manifest in the flesh*, he is God and man in one complex person. But this text, I think, does prove that his sonship doth not include godhead. And not only in this text, but in most or all these Scriptures it is manifest, that the character of Christ as a Son is set far below the Father, not only in order or in office, but in knowledge, power, sovereignty, self-sufficiency, and authority, which would naturally lead one to believe that his sonship in Scripture cannot refer to his godhead or divine nature, wherein he is by our greatest divines acknowledged to be equal to the Father in power and glory.

Now while we maintain the true deity of Christ, and that his complete person is God and man united; I see no necessity of applying all these texts to his godhead where his sonship is spoken of, since his sonship may be better referred to his inferior nature, or to his offices. And this will free us from those embarrassments and hardships, to which we have been driven to keep up the sublime idea of godhead in these Scriptures which call him *a Son*, and which at the same time carry so much of dependence and inferiority in them.

Objection II. Though it should be granted that there are several texts wherein Christ is called *the Son of God*, which cannot so well be referred to his divine nature, yet there are several other texts wherein Christ is represented as "the Son of God, begotten and born of God," which seem much more naturally to refer to his godhead, and can hardly be construed into a lower sense, *viz.*

Text I. *Prov.* viii. 24, 25, where wisdom says, *Before the hills, was I brought forth, &c.* which whole chapter is generally interpreted concerning the divine nature of Christ.

Answer I. It is not the design of my present discourse to prove that the divine nature of Christ has no sort or manner of derivation from the Father, real or relative: I neither affirm it nor deny it here. But that the name *Son of God*, in the New Testament, does not generally, if ever, signify his divine nature; this is my present theme: And therefore the allegation of this text out of *Proverbs* is not to our present purpose, nor is the name *Son of God* there used, nor is God called his *Father.*

Answer II. I dare not deny this chapter to relate to Christ; yet it does not follow, that it refers only to his divine nature, as I shall shew immediately. And it must be acknowledged that it is very hard to prove, that this eighth of *Proverbs* does certainly denote the person of Christ. Athanasius himself sometimes explains it another way; Bishop Patrick, that noble commentator, will scarce allow it; and many others have been of the opinion, that Solomon means only wisdom as a principle of contrivance and counsel, whether human or divine; or at most, the ideal world in the mind of God, though he uses such sort of personal characters in his description of this wisdom, in the Hebrew idiom.

It is granted that many of the ancients explained it of Christ, but some of the fathers supposed it to mean the Holy Spirit; and all men know they were but very poor expositors, who dealt much in allegory, and in straining of plain texts to their purposes: And since they cannot tell whether the Son or the Spirit be meant here, it is possible it may mean neither of them, by all the arguments which they have produced; for none of them are very conclusive.

Answer III. Supposing the divine *wisdom* in *Prov.* viii. primarily to signify the idea of the divine counsels and decrees about creation and redemption, it may be properly said, this wisdom was begotten or brought forth before the creation, and all this system of divine counsels being deposited with the pre-existent soul of Christ, in whom are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, this human soul of Christ, thus vested with divine ideas, it may be included in Solomon's idea of wisdom.

And those who believe the doctrine of the pre-existent soul of Christ, have made it appear that if it refer to Christ, is it very probable this pre-existent soul, considered as having the divine nature united to it, is here represented as commencing its existence, its union with godhead, receiving its commission, and beginning its office. And the learned Dr. Thomas Goodwin, though he firmly believed the eternal generation of Christ, as the Son of God, yet he supposes this chapter to relate to Christ, as God-man, and not merely to his godhead.

Text II. Is that remarkable one, *Psalm* ii. 7, *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee;* which has been usually interpreted by our divines, to signify the eternal sonship of Christ as God.

Answer I. It is evident that in *Acts* xiii. 33, St. Paul applies this to the resurrection

of Christ, and the beginning of his exaltation, and not to any eternal generation; so that we have a divine interpreter giving quite a different sense of it.

Answer II. Besides, Christ is here said to become a Son by a decree which cannot signify eternal generation, but must relate to his office.

Answer III. Again, it is spoken literally concerning the exaltation of David as the type of Christ to his kingdom, and not concerning the natural production or generation of David; and therefore in the antitype it must signify mystically the exaltation of Christ to his kingdom, and not his natural eternal generation.

Answer IV. Let it be farther remembered, that the word, *this day*, never signifies eternity in Scripture in any other place, and why then must it do so here?

Answer V. I add also, that this text is cited in *Heb.* i. 5, where it is joined with God's promise in future times to be a Father to Christ; *I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son;* which does not signify eternal generation. But of this verse I have spoken more largely in other places; and shewn that Bishop Pearson, Dr. Owen, and other zealous trinitarians, do not construe this text to mean the eternal generation of Christ.

Text III. Matt. xxviii. 19, *Baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.* Why is the Son joined with the Father and the Holy Ghost, who are confessedly divine, if the name *Son* does not include the godhead of Christ?

Answer. If Christ, considered as the Son of God, be personally united to the divine nature, or the eternal Word, he has godhead belonging to his complex person; and therefore the name *Son*, which signifies his personal character and office, may be well joined with the Father in this initiating ordinance, the whole complex person of Christ, who is the Son of God, including true godhead.

Text IV. Rom. i. 3, 4, *His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David, according to the flesh, and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.* Now some say, here is a plain antithesis between the human nature and divine nature of Christ: The human nature, which is called *the flesh*, and the divine nature, which is called *the Spirit of holiness;* and according to this divine nature he is declared to be the Son of God.

Answer I. There are several critics who believe the eternal generation of Christ, who yet do not suppose there is such an exact antithesis here; but they construe "the Spirit of holiness" to signify the Holy Ghost, who raised Christ from the dead, and who manifested, testified, and declared him to be the "Son of God with power by his resurrection."

Answer II. There are others who choose to support the antithesis, and make the Spirit of holiness to signify the glorious human spirit of Christ, replenished with all holiness; and suppose that the name, *Spirit of holiness*, is here given to this human soul of Christ, not only to aggrandise its character above all other holy creatures, but also to intimate that this Spirit governed the animal nature, and kept it pure, as well as to distinguish it from the Holy Spirit, which is the third of the sacred Three. But I am not so well satisfied in this exposition, and therefore I dare not venture to maintain it. But there is a third answer, which I prefer to both these:

Answer III. This text may be thus paraphrased: "Jesus Christ our Lord, who was derived from the seed of David, according to his fleshly original, or, the influence of the flesh into his birth, but was declared powerfully, by his resurrection from the dead, to be the Son of God, according to his supernatural and holy original, or, the influence of the Holy Spirit." So that *the flesh* here, does not mean any constituent part of Christ, or his very flesh or body, but the operation or influence of the flesh, or share that the flesh of the blessed virgin had in the conception of Christ: And so *the Spirit* does not mean any constituent part of Christ, but the influence or operation of the Holy Spirit in his first conception, or in his resurrection, on both which accounts he is called in Scripture *the Son of God.* See *Luke* i. 35, and *Acts* xiii. 33, and both are ascribed to the Holy Spirit. There is a large confirmation of this exposition, in some notes on *Rom.* i. 3, 4, wherein it is shewn how the antithesis of the apostle is preserved, and that the apostle always uses κατὰ σάρκα and κατὰ πνεῦμα in an antithesis, to signify the influence of each principle, rather than for two constituent parts of a person.

Text V. *Heb.* vii. 3, Melchisedec was *without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life, but made like unto the Son of God, abideth a priest continually.* Now this historical eternity of Melchisedec, whose father and mother, life and death, are not recorded, is made a type of the real eternity of Christ, considered as he is the Son of God.

Answer I. Since Melchisedec is represented here without a father, and yet as a type of the Son of God, it would destroy the doctrine of Christ's eternal generation from God the Father, rather than support it, since the very type here has no father.

Answer II. This place refers more naturally to the priesthood of Christ than to his nature or existence. His priesthood was not derived by genealogical succession, as Aaron's was: He had no father, no mother, of the Levitical tribe, or of the family of Aaron, from whom his priesthood could descend; nor did he die and leave it to others by way of descent; but was constituted a single priest himself, without a predecessor, without a successor: and herein the priesthood of Melchisedec and the priesthood of Christ run very parallel, and greatly answer the apostle's design. And I think this sense is patronised by some expressions in Dr. Owen's comment.

Text VI. *Heb.* i. 6, *When he bringeth in his first-begotten into the world, he saith, Let all the angels of God worship him;* that is, "let all the angels of God worship the first-begotten;" now this first-begotten is Jehovah, *Psalm* xcvii. 7, for thence the apostle cites it.

Answer. This first-begotten Son of God has true and eternal godhead personally dwelling in him, and united personally to him, and one with him; and therefore the whole complex person is called *Jehovah,* and is entitled to divine worship from angels and men. God united to the man Christ, *God manifest in the flesh—was seen of angels,* 1 Tim. iii. 16, and worshipped by them. This text does not prove that the first-begotten is God, any otherwise than by personal union with that Jehovah who is spoken of in the ninety-seventh *Psalm.* The first-begotten Son of God is to be worshipped by angels, because of the indwelling godhead, the great Jehovah, with whom the man Christ is one.

The last text, and which affords perhaps the most important objection against

my sense of the name, is *John* v. 18, compared with *John* x. 23, &c. If the title, *Son of God*, did not signify true godhead, why did the Jews charge Christ with blasphemy, and say, that he made himself equal with God, and seek to kill him, because he had said "God was his Father, his own Father," and as they construe it, making himself equal with God? *John* v. 18. And why do they charge him again with blasphemy when he said, *I am the Son of God?* John x. 33, *Because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God.* How could this be, if the name, *Son of God*, did not signify godhead?

I have given some answer to that text in the fifth of *John*, in some of the foregoing pages. But to make it yet clearer, I proceed:

Answer I. It is possible that some learned men among them might have a confused notion from the prophecies of the Old Testament, that the Messiah or the Son of God was to have true and real godhead in him, which godhead of the Messiah is a certain truth, and hath been sufficiently proved.—Now, because he called himself *the Son of God*, and represented himself as the Messiah, therefore they might infer that he assumed that godhead to himself which belonged to the complete character of the Messiah, and upon this account might charge him with blasphemy, by way of consequence.

Yet I have much reason to doubt, whether the scribes and pharisees did certainly know that the Messiah was to be the true God; for the whole nation of the Jews, with their priests and doctors, were most stupidly and shamefully ignorant of the true character and glory of the Messiah and his kingdom. Had the pharisees themselves any notion that Christ was to be the true God, they would never have been puzzled and silenced at that question of our Saviour, *Matt.* xxii. 43, 44, &c. "If the Messiah be the Son of David, how could David call him Lord?" or, *If David call him Lord, how is he his Son?* Their supposition of the godhead of the Messiah would have easily answered this difficulty, if they had had any such opinion.

Besides, we have little reason to suppose that the pharisees knew more of the divinity of the Messiah than the disciples themselves did during the life of Christ. Now it appears from many parts of the history of the gospel, that they did hardly believe at all that he was the true God; or if they did, yet their faith of it was very low, wavering, and doubtful; and yet doubtless they firmly believed Jesus to be the Messiah and the Son of God, in a sense sufficient for salvation.

When Peter, in the name of the rest, had made so glorious a confession, *Matt.* xvi. 16, *Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God*, he could not mean that Christ was the great and glorious God; for in *verse* 22, he took up his master very short, and *began to rebuke him.* Surely he would not have rebuked the great God his Maker, at least not immediately after such a confession of his godhead.

Now, if the apostles themselves were in a state of grace and salvation, when they can hardly be supposed to believe Christ to be the true and the eternal God, and yet they believed and professed him to be the Son of God, then that name, *Son of God*, doth not necessarily imply and include his divinity.

But to return to the objection:

That which I take to be the plainest, the clearest, and the most scriptural solution of this difficulty, is this which follows:

Answer II. It is evident, that the design of the wicked Jews, in these places of the history, was to bring the highest accusation against our Saviour, and to load him with the grossest calumnies that all their wit or malice could draw from his words or actions; Luke xi. 54, *Laying wait for him, and seeking to catch something out of his mouth, that they might accuse him.*

If ever he spake of his kingdom, though he owned "his kingdom was not of this world," *John* xviii. 36, yet they in their malice would construe it into sedition and rebellion, and make him an enemy to Cæsar. And so when he called God his *own Father*, and declared himself to be *the Son of God*, they, in the fury of their false zeal, construed it into blasphemy; as though to own himself to be the Son of God, were to assume eqnality with God: Whereas Christ shews them plainly, that these words did not necessarily imply such a sense; and this is sufficiently manifest by the defence which Christ made for himself in both those places of the history. Give me leave to repeat briefly what I said before.

If we look into *John* v. 18, when the Jews accused him, that by calling God his Father he made himself *equal with God*, he doth by no means vindicate that sense of his name *Son of God*, but rather denies his equality with God considered as a SON, verse 19, &c. *Verily, verily I say—the Son can do nothing of himself.—The Father sheweth the Son all things that he doth, and he will shew him greater works than these.* Thence I infer, that he hath not shewn him all yet; and verse 30, *I can of my ownself do nothing.—I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father, which hath sent me, &c.* All which expressions sufficiently evince, that he did not intend to signify his own godhead, or equality with God, when he called himself *the Son of God;* for in his very answer to their accusation he represents himself inferior to, and dependent on God the Father.

Now let us look into the other text, where our Saviour is thus accused, and defends himself, *viz. John* x. 30—39, he saith, *I and my Father are one.* 31, *Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him.* 32. *Jesus answered them, Many good works have I shewed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me?* 33. *The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy, and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God.* 34. *Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, ye are gods?* 35. *If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the Scripture cannot be broken:* 36. *Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?*

In which portion of Scripture we may observe these three things:

1. That Christ doth neither plainly and expressly own nor deny himself here to be the true God, for this was not a proper time to satisfy the curiosity of the malicious Jews in such a sublime doctrine, in which he had not as yet clearly and fully instructed his own disciples. Yet,

2. He gives several hints of his godhead, or his being one with the Father, when he says, *I and my Father are one;* and when he says, verse 38, *I do* the works of my Father, *that ye may know and believe that the Father is in me, and I in him;* by which he secretly intimated that the man Jesus had also a divine nature in him, and was personally united to God, though he did not think fit to preach his own godhead plainly at that time.

And indeed, if he had not been the true God, and in that sense one with the Father, we may justly suppose, that he would upon this occasion have denied himself to be the true God, and thus roundly renounced the conclusion itself which they pretended to draw from his words, as well as he did deny the justness of their consequence, from his calling himself the Son of God. And therefore since he did not renounce the conclusion, we may reasonably infer that he was the true God: But since he does not deny the justness of their consequence, we may as reasonably infer that his mere calling himself the Son of God does not prove nor include his godhead; which appears plainer under the next particular. I say therefore,

3. The chief design of his answer was to refute the calumny of the Jews, and the weakness of their inference, by shewing that the name, *Son of God*, doth not necessarily signify one equal to God; but that the necessary sense of it here can rise no higher than to denote one who was nearer to the Father, and was sanctified, sealed, and sent by the Father, in a way superior to all former prophets, kings, and magistrates, to whom the word of God came, and who, partly on this account, might be called gods.

Prophets or kings, judges or doctors of the law, were called *gods*, and *children*, or *sons, of the Most High*, in *Psalm* lxxxii. 6, and in other places of Scripture, because they came from God, they were commissioned by God, and carried with them some representation of the wisdom, power, authority, and dominion of God in the sight of men. Now our Lord Jesus Christ, the Messiah, the great prophet, judge, doctor or teacher, and king of his church, came forth from God in heaven, in a literal and more eminent manner, was sent by him into this world with a higher commission, and represented more of the wisdom, power, and dominion of God, than any former kings or prophets ever did; and if they upon this account were dignified with the name or title of *gods*, or *sons of God*, much more right has the Messiah to this name or title.

The argument which our Lord uses is *a minori ad majus;* he puts the reason of his more unquestionable and superior right to this title upon the superiority of his character and mission, or his more immediate commission from the Father. His words might be paraphrased thus: "They who were originally in and of this world were made prophets, teachers, or kings, merely by the word of God coming to them, and giving them commission, either by the ordinary directions of the written word, or, at best, they received their authority from the word of God coming to them* by some voice or vision, some divine message or inspiration, and yet they had the title of *gods* given them. Therefore the Messiah, who was not originally of this world, but was with the Father, who was sanctified, that is, anointed with the Spirit, or set apart by God himself, who came forth from the Father in heaven, and was sent immediately by the Father into this world, may surely be called the *Son of God* without danger of blasphemy. If they are called *gods*, the Messiah may well be called the *Son of God*."

* Our Lord knew that he himself was the divine *Logos*, or Word of God, and it is likely that he used these words, *to whom the word of God came*, with this view and meaning in his own mind: "Surely if those are called gods, to whom the divine *Logos*, or Word, made a visit from the Father, the divine *Logos* himself, who came from the Father, may be well called *the Son of God* without blasphemy." But he did not think fit to express himself so plainly to the Jews at that time, though he has left it upon record in his gospel for our observation and instruction.

And he confirms the argument thus: *The Scripture cannot be broken*, ὐ δύναται λυθῆναι, "cannot be contradicted. As he who acts contrary to a precept is said to break it, λύειν, see *Matt.* v. 19. *John* v. 18, and vii. 23; so he who contradicts an assertion of Scripture is properly said λύειν, to break it. Therefore, since the Scripture, which cannot be contradicted, calls those ancient rulers, teachers, or prophets, *gods*, as well as *sons of God*, he who is appointed the most glorious prophet and ruler, might have been justified by the language of Scripture, if he had assumed the name *God* to himself, in direct and express language, and much more abundantly is he justified when he has only called himself *the Son of God.*"

And indeed it is worth our observation here, that though the Jews built part of their accusation upon his saying, *I and my Father are one*, Jesus does not directly answer to those words, nor undertake to vindicate or explain them; because he might design in those words to intimate his godhead, or his oneness with God the Father: Therefore he neglects and drops this part of the ground of their charge, and applies himself entirely to answer their accusation, as it was built upon his calling God his own Father, and himself the Son of God: And this he did because he knew that this name did not necessarily imply equality with God, and so he could boldly refute their inference, and renounce the charge.

Yet it should be observed also, that before Christ leaves them, he leads them to his godhead, that is, to his most intimate union with the godhead of the Father, verse 38, *That ye may know and believe that the Father is in me, and I in him;* "that he and his Father are one," as he before expressed his godhead.

Thus I have explained myself at large in what I think to be the very scope and force of our Saviour's argument; and indeed if we take the word, *Son of God*, to signify necessarily in that place an equality with the Father; we plainly take away the force of our Saviour's argument and defence, and we leave the accusation of the malicious Jews in its full force against him.*

In short, our Saviour's answer must necessarily mean one of these two things, *viz.*

Either when he called himself *the Son of God*, he did design to let them know that he was equal to God, but that he was no blasphemer, because it was a great truth:

Or he designed to tell them, that his words did not necessarily signify that he was equal to God, and therefore he was no blasphemer; that their inference was not just, and that they carried the charge further than his words would bear. One of these two must, I think, be our Saviour's design.

Now that he did not design the first of these, that is, to shew that he was equal to God, seems evident to me, because his answer cannot reach this sense; and if strained to this sense, it is very obscure and far-fetched: It might also have been spoken in much plainer language twenty ways, if it had been his design to tell the Jews, that he was equal with God; and he would doubtless have proved it by plainer citations out of the Old Testament, which assert the divinity of the Messiah, had it been his design to declare and maintain his godhead at that time.

* The learned Dr. Waterland, whose zeal for the deity of Christ, and whose skill in the defence of it, are sufficiently known, himself confesses that the Jews could not from Christ's own expression clearly convict him of meaning more than that he was God, in the improper sense of the word, as it had been used *Psalm* lxxxii. 6. See his *Vindication of Christ's Divinity*, page 55.

But if we suppose his design was only to shew the falsehood of their inference, and that they had strained his words too far, then the whole paragraph is natural, and easy to be understood, in the manner I have explained it.

From all this it will follow, that the belief of Christ to be the Son of God, in some more eminent sense than all the ancient prophets and kings were, that is, to be the glorious Messiah, is all that Christ directly and plainly designed in calling himself the *Son of God;* and this must be all that was made necessary to salvation, in those Scriptures which required their belief in him as the Son of God.

Thus I have made it appear that the name, *Son of God*, cannot necessarily imply his divine nature, much less the incomprehensible eternal generation of the Son in one essence with the Father. For though I firmly believe him to be true God, and in that sense one with the Father, yet I would not place the chief weight of this doctrine on such arguments as will not support it, nor build so important a truth on an insufficient foundation.

But this thought leads me to the next section.

SECTION IV.

WHAT ADVANTAGE IS THERE IN NOT APPLYING THE NAME "SON OF GOD" TO THE DIVINE NATURE OF CHRIST?

AFTER all, many a pious Christian will be ready to inquire and say, Since you acknowledge Jesus Christ to have a divine nature, and to be truly and properly God, why have you taken so much pains to shew that his name, *the Son of God*, in Scripture, does not necessarily signify either his godhead, or his co-eternal generation and sonship?

To this inquiry, I hope I can give some satisfactory answers, and offer such reasons as may justify and support this attempt, and guard it from the just censures of every reasonable and intelligent reader.

I. I was willing to search the true sense of Scripture in this point, and to understand the meaning of God in his word.

Where any expression is used so very frequently in the Bible as this name, *the Son of God*, is, and that in texts of awful and solemn importance, which determine the things necessary to our salvation, it is of great moment to know the meaning of that expression, that we may not include too little or too much in it: And this in order to understand the Scripture aright, in things necessary to salvation, and to have a true idea of what the Spirit of God means and intends; that we may not flatter careless hypocrites with vain hopes of salvation, by setting the mark too low, nor discourage humble believers, by setting it too high; and that we may not abuse ourselves by false and mistaken notions, and imagine that we derive them all from the word of God.

II. I was afraid to build my belief of the deity of Christ upon feeble and insufficient foundations, and therefore I thought it necessary to examine this argument, which is drawn from his sonship.

The great doctrine of the godhead of our Lord Jesus Christ, and faith in him as the true God, has been by many persons built chiefly on this name which is given him, *viz. the Son of God;* and that upon this bare presumption, that, as a son amongst men

has the same specific nature with his father, so the Son of God must have the same individual nature with his Father; but how weak this argument is to support such a doctrine, appears in the foregoing discourse. Now I would not have the faith of Christians in any important doctrine, that is divinely true, built upon a supposition that is feeble or false, lest the adversaries take occasion to insult the faith of Christians, and to decry the doctrine itself, as though it had no better arguments or foundations to support it.

Besides, when Christians have built their own faith and hopes upon a foundation so feeble and uncertain, they are more liable to have their creed shaken, and to part with the glorious doctrine itself; and therefore I would persuade them rather to build their faith on such arguments as will stand the test against all opposers: And I think most of those which I have made use of in the Eighth and Ninth Propositions of the *Treatise of the Christian Doctrine of the Trinity*, may lay a claim to this character, and will better support this faith, than any argument derived from his mere generation or sonship. See pages 289, 296—321.

III. It is necessary, as far as possible, to remove all cavils from every important doctrine of Christianity, and such is that of the deity of Christ.

Now if the doctrine of his deity be built on his sonship, then he must be true God, considered as he is a son; but the notion of a *son* in all languages of mankind importing some sort of derivation and dependence, and the notion of *godhead* importing independence and self-existence, seem to carry a sort of contradiction in them. And this becomes a mighty prejudice to the minds of men, against their belief of the deity of Christ, when they are told, that he is God as he is a son, or that his deity depends on his sonship; that is, his deity is included in his derived and dependent character.

Though I will not here assert that absolute self-existence and independence belong to every thing in and of God, for I know not what powers or properties of godhead depend on each other, yet I would not willingly prove the godhead of Christ from the very name which seems to exclude self-existence and independence, since there are many other and better proofs of it.

And though I dare not utterly renounce all those schemes of explaining the Trinity, which make the divine nature of Christ to be, in any way or manner whatsoever, derived or communicated from the Father, for I must own myself lost in these unsearchables; yet I would not make the necessary proof of the divinity of Christ to depend on such a notion, as in the common language of mankind implies derivation and dependence: And by this means, I think, I better guard this sacred truth from some of the cavils that have attended it.

Now if by this exposition of the name, *Son of God*, I remove any of the great impediments out of the way of the arians or socinians, from believing the true deity of Christ, then I shall account myself to have done service and honour to that glorious article of our faith.

IV. I would do something to take away that anathema and damning sentence, which some parties of Christians, who believe the divinity of Christ, have thrown on others, who also believe his divinity, merely for not explaining some particular Scriptures in the same way and manner that they do, or for not using the same arguments to prove his divinity.

Since it is made a test for our eternal salvation in some places of Scripture, whether we believe Jesus to be the Son of God, or no; and since there are now, and have been in former ages, many Christians of great piety and worth, who doubt of the consubstantial sonship of Christ, and the eternal generation of his person, even though they believe his true and proper godhead, I would not willingly encourage the Scripture to be interpreted in such a mistaken sense, as should exclude all these pious and excellent persons from salvation, and forbid them the kingdom of heaven. For they may believe him to be true God, and to be also the Son of God, though they do not believe his godhead to be owing to his sonship.

There are some persons who have been so severe as to pass a condemning sentence on all those who deny Christ the Son, considered as the Son, to be the true God. I hope they have done it merely through inadvertence, or because they thought it to be utterly impossible to maintain the godhead of Christ upon any other foot but that of his co-eternal and consubstantial sonship. But whatsoever be their reason for such unjust censure, yet I must confess I do not love to see condemnation and everlasting death thrown upon persons who believe the same scriptural doctrine of the deity of Christ that we do, but choose to explain it another way.

Thus some of my motives to this inquiry are to do justice to the truths of God, and some arise from charity to the souls of men. Nor is my zeal for the honour of my Lord Jesus Christ in the least abated; for while I believe him in his complex person to be both the true and eternal God, and also the only-begotten Son of the Father, and while I profess him to be withal the great Prophet and Teacher, as well as the Saviour of his church; I conceive that more honour is done him by searching out that true and exact meaning of his own words, which this heavenly Teacher designed to convey to us, than by persuading the world to read his eternal godhead in those places, where he did not design to reveal and express it to men.

QUESTION II.

DID THE DISCIPLES OF CHRIST FULLY BELIEVE THAT HE WAS THE TRUE GOD DURING HIS LIFE-TIME, OR NOT TILL AFTER HIS DEATH AND RESURRECTION?

IN order to solve this question, let us make these following inquiries, *viz.*

I. What notion the Jews had of their Messiah in general?

II. What ideas or notions Christ taught his disciples concerning himself?

III. What apprehensions or notions the disciples received and embraced concerning Christ?

IV. What indications they may be supposed to give, tending toward the belief of his godhead?

V. What indications they give of their ignorance, or doubt of it; or at least, what evidences there are of the fluctuation and uncertainty of their faith in that matter?

Now by balancing these things one with another, we may at last come to form some true judgment about the present question.

SECTION I.

THE JEWS' OLD OPINION CONCERNING THE MESSIAH.

I. WHAT notion had the Jews in general concerning their Messiah?

Answer. Though the Old Testament furnished them with sufficient prophecies concerning his divine and human nature, his spiritual kingdom, his sufferings, his death, and resurrection from the dead; yet so wretchedly blinded were they with the corrupt glosses of their teachers, and with their own foolish prejudices, that they did agree in no notion concerning the Messiah more universally than in these false and mistaken ones, *viz.* that he was to be a glorious temporal prince, that he was never to suffer, nor to die, and consequently not to rise again, and that he was to exalt their nation equal to, or beyond its ancient grandeur, and to raise them to a temporal sovereignty over all the nations of the earth.

And the disciples themselves were so rooted in these mistaken notions, that nothing could quite cure them but the actual death and resurrection of Christ, his ascent to heaven, and his pouring down the enlightening Spirit at the days of Pentecost. For we find it evident enough, that the two sons of Zebedee, James and John, hoped to be made great ministers of state, and "sit at his right hand and at his left," in a temporal kingdom, *Matt.* xx. 21. We read that when our Lord spoke of his own death and sufferings, Peter rebuked him for it, *Matt.* xvi. 22. And none of them knew what his *rising from the dead should mean*, Mark ix. 10; for they thought, together with the rest of the people, that Christ or the Messiah, *abideth for ever*, that is, must never die, *John* xii. 34. And even after the resurrection of Christ, they expected, with some impatience, the same temporal glory and grandeur, when they said, Acts i. 6, *Lord, wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom unto Israel?*

But to descend to particulars, and inquire what opinion the Jews had of the nature of their Messiah, who or what he was to be?

1. They generally believed he should be a man of their own nation, of the tribe of Judah, of the seed of David, born at Bethlehem, who was to be the king of the Jews, and their Saviour. When Herod demanded *where* the Messiah, *the king of the Jews, should be born*, the chief-priests, and scribes, told him at Bethlehem; Matt. ii. 5, *And they said to him, In Bethlehem of Judea; for thus it is written by the prophet, And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Judea, art not the least among the princes of Juda, for out of thee shall come a governor that shall rule my people Israel.* And when Jesus asked the pharisees, *Matt.* xxii. 42, "Whose son is Christ," or the Messiah? they roundly answered, *The Son of David.*

Yet others of the Jews were so very ignorant and doubtful in this matter, that they refused Jesus, and denied him to be the Messiah, for this very reason, because they knew his birth and parentage; John vii. 27, *We know this man whence he is; but when Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence he is.*

2. They believed that he had an existence before he came into the world; for we can hardly suppose that the scribes and priests should be so ready in citing one part of this verse, *Micah* v. 2, which shews him to be born at Bethlehem, and take no notice of the

other part of it, a *ruler in Israel, whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting*. Yet it may perhaps be doubted whether this opinion was universal, because in some instances they were stupid enough to believe one part of a chapter or period concerning the Messiah's glory, and neglect another part which related to his sufferings.

3. They believed that he had some glorious and eminent relation to God. This appears from the name of honour that the Messiah was universally known by amongst them, *viz. the Son of God*. The scribes, the pharisees, the priests, and all the Jews, talked with our Lord Jesus freely about the Messiah, under this name and title, as being the common name of the Messiah, and perfectly well known amongst them, *viz.* that the Messiah was the Son of God in some superior and more excellent way. When Philip told Nathanael, John i. 45, *We have found him of whom Moses and the prophets did write*, that is, the Messiah; Nathanael, being convinced that Jesus was he, presently saluted him by this name. *Thou art the Son of God, thou art the king of Israel.*

4. The prophets in the Old Testament frequently intimate the divinity of Christ; and some few of the ancient Jews might probably believe that he was the *memra*, or word of the Lord, the *shechinah* or glorious habitation of God, of which the Chaldee paraphrast sometimes speaks. Doctor Allix, in his *Judgment of the Ancient Jewish Church*, against the unitarians, seems to be too positive and triumphant in this point, that this *memra* or *logos*, to which the Chaldee paraphrast ascribes the creation of the world, and the government of it, and particularly of the jewish nation, is the Messiah in their sense. Mr. Nye and others utterly deny it. But the excellent Mr. Robert Fleming, in his *Discourse of Christology*, Vol. I. pages 136—144, very judiciously follows a middle path, and tells us, "That he did not find one of the many citations used by Dr. Allix that seemed to necessitate our judgment this way. Therefore he ran through the targums himself in those places where he thought it most probable to find what he sought, and yet could find but few passages that seemed very plainly to relate to the Messiah." Upon which he concludes, "That though the word *memra* is sometimes used for the Messiah, yet it is much more frequently used in other senses, and that the jewish *memra* and Messiah are spoken of sometimes as two distinct beings or persons."*

But what doubtful hints or plain evidences soever there might be from the books of the prophets, or these paraphrastical authors, that Christ was to be the true God, yet the Jews in Christ's time did not generally believe it: And though some learned authors have asserted it, yet I never saw it proved.

Surely if the Pharisees had but embraced this opinion, they could never have been at a loss to have answered our Lord Jesus, when he asked them, *Matt.* xxii. 45, 46, "If Christ be David's Son, how doth he in spirit call him Lord?" It was plain by their silence and confusion, that they did not believe his godhead. Bishop Bull is of this

* Mr. Fleming in that place tells us, that though he could not find the words *memra* and *Messiah* used as explicatory of one another in those places which are plainly prophetical of Christ, yet he supposes the reason might be this, "that *memra* denotes Christ with relation only to his divine nature before his assuming human nature, and *Messiah* denotes him only as he was to appear visibly and become man; therefore it was hardly possible that both these words should be used of him at once." See *Christology*, Vol. I. page 143. Thus it is evident, that Mr. Fleming searched after this notion with a seeming inclination to find it true, yet he could not find so great and incontested evidence of it, as to suppose that the ancient Jews generally embraced this opinion, that the *memra*, or Word of God, was the same with the Messiah.

mind, as well as Dr. Whitby. See Bull's *Judicium Ecclesiæ Catholicæ*, &c. Capite I. Sectione XIII. and Whitby's *Commentary*.

In short, their notions of this matter were so very confused, so uncertain, so inconsistent, and so various, that they cannot be reduced to any certain or settled scheme of sentiments.

SECTION II.

WHAT IDEAS DID CHRIST GIVE HIS DISCIPLES OF HIMSELF?

II. I PROCEED now, in the second place, to inquire, What ideas or notions our Lord Jesus Christ taught his disciples concerning himself?

1. He takes particular pains upon many occasions to shew that he was sent from God, or received commission from heaven, to teach the doctrines which he taught, and to perform those glorious and surprising miracles which he wrought, to confirm both his doctrine and his commission. This is so largely insisted on in the fifth, sixth, and following chapters of the gospel by St. John, that I need not cite particular instances.

2. He proves by most infallible evidences, that he was the Messiah, the Saviour of mankind: And he endeavoured to lead his disciples out of their own national prejudices, and to give them a juster notion of the office of the Messiah, and his spiritual kingdom. This he did in several of his discourses.

But as to the proof that he himself was the Messiah, he did not labour this point so much by any long or direct discourses on this subject, as by his preaching grace and duty, so as "never man spake before;" by his miracles and his appearance upon all occasions, with the marks and characters of the Messiah upon him. To prove this, I shall give but one instance instead of many: When John the Baptist sent his disciples to ask him whether he was the Messiah or no, Matt. xi. 3, *Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?* Our Lord answered them only, by bidding them tell John their master, that "*the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the dead are raised, and the poor have the gospel preached to them;* and let John and his followers judge by these characters whether I am the Messiah or no." Though I confess there are two or three occasions also which he took to profess himself the Messiah in direct and plain words, *John* iv. 29, and ix. 37.

He often takes occasion to declare, that he had a being before he came into this world: John iii. 13, *No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man, &c.* John vi. 38, *I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.* Verse 51, *I am the living bread, which came down from heaven.* Chap. viii. 14, *I know whence I came, and whither I go.* Chap. xvi. 28, *I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world; again, I leave the world, and go to the Father.* And his disciples understood him in the plain literal sense, *verse* 29, for immediately his disciples said unto him, *Lo, now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no proverb.* Chap. viii. 58, *Verily I say unto you, before Abraham was, I am.* And in his prayer to his Father, chap. xvii. 5, *Now, O Father, glorify me with thine ownself, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.* Ver. 24, *My glory which thou hast given me; for thou lovedest me before the foundation of the world.*

4. He assumes to himself the character of the Son of God, and that in a more

eminent and superior way than men or angels are the sons of God; for he calls himself *the only-begotten Son of God*, John iii. 16, 18; "the beloved Son of God," *John* v. 20; which he also took care that his disciples should know, twice by a voice from heaven; *Luke* iii. 22, at his baptism, and *Luke* ix. 35, at his transfiguration. He told them also that he was "such a Son of God, as knew the Father so as none besides knew him," *Luke* x. 22; "such a Son as that the Father shewed him all things that himself did," *John* v. 20; and that "whatsoever things the Father doth, these doth the Son likewise," *verse* 19; that "the Father has committed all judgment to him, that all men should honour the Son as they honour the Father," *verses* 22, 23; and that "the dead should hear the voice of the Son of God and live; and as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself:" Which things cannot be supposed to be spoken of any mere creature, and therefore by this sort of language, he gave some intimations of his union with godhead, or his divinity, though the mere name *Son of God* be not construed to so divine a sense.

5. He sometimes takes opportunity to acquaint them with his most intimate union or oneness with the Father, and his peculiar communion with him. For when he says, John x. 29, *My Father, which gave me* my sheep, *is greater than all;* yet he adds in the next verse, *I and my Father are one;* which, I think, are intimations of a superior and inferior nature, and that the divine nature of the Father was in him. This also he discovers in some other places: John x. 38, *Believe the works* that I do, *that ye may know and believe that the Father is in me, and I in him.* John xiv. 7—11, *If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also; and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him. Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou, Shew us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words that I speak unto you, I speak not of myself; but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. Believe me, that I am in the Father, and the Father in me; or else believe me for the very works' sake.*

6. There are also several other intimations that our Lord gave of his divinity, though it was not the doctrine that he thought fit at that time to teach in plain and express language. When he tells them, that *where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them*, Matt. xviii. 20, the Greek words are ἐκεῖ εἰμι, which seem to denote a divine omnipresence: When he says to Peter, *I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven*, Matt. xvi. 19, it sounds god-like: When he promises the disciples, *I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay*, Luke xxi. 15: When, John ii. 19, *Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up*, he imitates divine language so much, that it might have led the disciples onward to the belief of his deity.

His active behaviour and conduct in several instances was such, as there is some reason to think he would scarce have practised, had he not been true God; such as his taking frequent occasion to shew that he knew their hearts and their secret thoughts; his godlike way in working some of his miracles, which seems to be the very same which a god incarnate would have used; his sovereign and godlike manner in casting out devils, and his conveying miraculous gifts, in the same way that God himself would probably have done; and his giving the Holy Spirit to his dis-

ciples, in such a manner; John xx. 21, 22, *As my Father hath sent me, even so I send you: And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and said unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost;* which seems to be an imitation of God creating the human soul of Adam, Gen. ii. 7, *He breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul.* Though it must be noted indeed that this was after his resurrection, and so comes not within the reach of my present inquiry.

His passive behaviour also was such as we can hardly suppose he would have practised, had he not been God; for he admitted persons on several occasions to worship him, which we find both angels and apostles always forbid, lest they should seem to assume the divine prerogative and honour: He did not deny his godhead when the Jews charged him with assuming equality with God, &c. several of which circumstances, both of the active and passive conduct of our Lord Jesus Christ, are set in the fairest and strongest light towards the proof of his divinity, by Mr. Hughes, in his *Two Essays* on that subject. And some parts of the argument seem to carry great weight and force with them; but I would not venture to lay the whole stress of the cause there.

Thus, though our blessed Saviour did not plainly and expressly declare that he was the true and eternal God; for his divine prudence did not think it proper to express his godhead in such direct and glorious language at that season;* yet by all these methods of speech, and by this divine conduct of his, which I have described in the three last particulars, he seems to have given abundant intimations that his "human nature had a peculiar union to, and communion with godhead:" But since the New Testament is complete, we can understand those hints better than his disciples could in that day.

And though he did not use these words, "that Jesus the Son of man is personally united to the divine nature," yet he said so much as in our apprehension now amounts to this sense, when he said, *I and my Father are one,* John x. 30. *I am in the Father, and the Father in me.—The Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.—He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father, &c.* John xiv. 9—11; that is, "he hath seen the glory, and power, and grace of the Father, whose divine nature or godhead is also in the Son, and dwells in me bodily." And though we can never tell exactly what makes the personal union between the divine and human natures in Christ; yet perhaps this may be a just evidence of a personal union with the godhead, *viz.* when the actions, and characters, and sufferings which Christ performed and sustained, might be properly said to be performed and sustained immediately by God himself. But I much question whether his disciples in that day did certainly infer so much from these words.

* It is no wonder that our Saviour did not freely and publicly declare his own godhead in plain and express language, when he did not choose to declare himself the Messiah in such an evident manner of speech, but very seldom, and that privately too; though the doctrine of his Messiahship was then of so much more importance.

But there are many special reasons also which might be given, why our Lord Jesus did not proclaim his own godhead during the time of his ministry on earth. I shall mention but one that is evident and sufficient, *viz.* that he must have done it either with plain and convincing proofs of it, or without them. If he had only asserted it plainly, without convincing proof, he had hastened the malice of the Jews to put him to death for blasphemy, before he had fulfilled all his designed ministry upon earth. On the other hand, if he had given most convincing proofs of it while he asserted it, the Jews and gentiles had been restrained from putting him to death at all; for St. Paul tells us expressly, 1 *Cor.* ii. 8, "Had the princes of this world known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory."

SECTION III.

WHAT IDEA THE DISCIPLES HAD OF CHRIST?

III. I COME now to consider " what apprehensions or notions the disciples did receive concerning our Lord Jesus Christ in his own life-time?"

It is not enough for me here to repeat the foregoing heads, and shew what Christ told them; for we cannot say the disciples understood and effectually learned all that our Lord Jesus Christ taught them. It is evident in many other places of the history of the gospel, that he spoke several things to them which were above their present apprehension; the Spirit of God, which was promised to descend upon them, was not only to " bring to remembrance the things that Christ had spoken;" but to give them a fuller understanding in the meaning of them. And as there were many things which Christ had to say to them, but forebore in his life-time, " because they could not bear them yet," *John* xvi. 12; so there were some things which he did speak to them in a more obscure manner, by hints and intimations, which they could not at that time bear in the full light and glory of a divine explication.

But if we search the evangelical history, I think we shall find that they received and entertained the following sentiments concerning him:

1. They firmly believed that he was sent of God. Our Lord Jesus Christ himself was witness to this their faith, *John* xvii. 8, *I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me, and they have received them,—and they have believed that thou didst send me.*

2. They were convinced that he was the true Messiah, John vi. 69, *We believe, and are sure, that thou art the Christ.*

3. That he had a peculiar and glorious relation to God, that he was *the Son of the living God,* which primarily referred to the dignity of his person, and oftentimes included in it also his character or office as the appointed Saviour. This was the substance of Nathanael's confession, John i. 49, *Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the king of Israel.* This was also Peter's confession, Matt. xvi. 16, *Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God,* which he spake in the name of the rest; as well as *John* vi. 69, where the same words are repeated.

4. They believed also that he had an existence before he came into this world. When the disciples told him, John xvi. 30, *We believe that thou camest forth from God;* it is evident from the context that they did not only mean that he received his commission from heaven, and was sent by God to preach to the world; but that he had a being with the Father before he came into this world, as he himself expresses it, verse 28, *I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world; again, I leave the world, and go to the Father;* which they understood in the literal sense, without metaphors, as they themselves express it: *Now thou speakest plainly, and speakest no proverb,* or metaphor, *verse* 29. And our Lord Jesus Christ, in his testimony concerning them, seems to make these two distinct articles of their belief, *viz.* his pre-existence and his mission; John xvii. 8, *They have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me.*

5. They believed also that God was in a most eminent and peculiar manner present

with him, according to the multitude of expressions he had used to that purpose, of his Father's "being with him," and of the Father's "dwelling in him:" And this was the language of their sermons at first: *Acts* x. 38, "Jesus of Nazareth did great things, for God was with him." But they did not seem to have any fixed and certain belief of such a peculiar and personal union of the man Christ Jesus with the true God during his life-time, as to give him the name and title of *God*. They had heard him say, that "he and his Father were one;" but they did scarce understand his oneness with the Father, and communion in the godhead in so sublime a sense, as was afterwards revealed to them, for they never called him God before his resurrection. Which brings me to the next general head.

SECTION IV.

WHAT EVIDENCE THEY GAVE OF BELIEVING HIS TRUE DEITY?

IV. THE fourth thing I proposed was to shew what indications the disciples may be supposed to give, tending towards a belief of his godhead.

1. Upon some special occasions they worshipped him. The leper that was cleansed worshipped Christ, *Matt.* viii. 2. The ruler that sought the life of his daughter, worshipped him, *Matt.* ix. 18. The woman of Canaan worshipped him, saying, *Lord, help me*, Matt. xv. 25. But all this was before he wrought the miracle in their favour: And probably it signifies no more than a great degree of humility in the manner of their petition, perhaps a bowing the knee, or falling on the face at his feet.

The blind man, who was healed, worshipped him also, when he professed himself to be the Son of God, *John* ix. 38; and his disciples that were in the ship worshipped him, when he walked on the water and suppressed the storm, *Matt.* xiv. 32, 33.

But it may be doubted whether all this arises to the notion of religious and divine worship, since this word is sometimes used in Scripture, referring to moral or civil honours paid to our fellow-creatures: 1 *Chron.* xxix. 20, they *bowed down their heads and worshipped the Lord and the king*. *Matt.* xviii. 26, the servant *fell down and worshipped* his Lord. *Rev.* iii. 9, where Christ himself says to the church at Sardis, *I will make them to come and worship before thy feet*. And perhaps some that knew not that Christ was God, might pay this sort of worship to him here on earth, that is, a mere high degree of reverence and obeisance under the surprising influence of the miracles which they heard of, or which they saw.

When one of the ten lepers which were healed, came back, *Luke* xvii. 15, 16, it is said, *with a loud voice he glorified God, and fell down on his face at the feet* of Christ, *giving him thanks; and he was a Samaritan*. Now it may be observed here, that the cleansed leper first glorified God, as the great Author and first cause of his healing, and then fell down on his face in a worshipping posture at the feet of Christ, to give him thanks, as the glorious means and miraculous instrument of his deliverance, not knowing that Christ who healed him, was himself the true God.

Thus these persons did not seem to worship our Lord, as the true and eternal God, with proper divine worship. Yet it seems probable that he would have scarce accepted of any such imitation of divine worship, or indulged any thing that had the appearance

of it, if he had not been true God. Many persons might pay Christ this high degree of honour and prostration without belief of his deity, though perhaps he would have refused it, had he been a mere creature; even as Cornelius worshipped Peter, *Acts* x. 25, when we have no reason to believe that he thought Peter was the true God. Yet Peter forbid it, lest it should have any appearance of assuming divine dignity to himself.

2. Simon Peter was greatly surprised at the multitude of fishes taken at once, when he let down his net at the direction of Christ; *Luke* v. 4, &c. When he saw it, *he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord.* Which expression may seem to import, "Thou art so holy and pure, O Lord, and hast something so divine in thee, and so much like God, who hates all sin, that such a poor sinful wretch as I am, have too much defilement in me to come so near thee, and may have just reason to dread thy presence." Whether he might at this season have an overwhelming glimpse of his divinity, it is not easy to say: But it may be easily said, that this miracle alone was not sufficient to give a just convincing proof of his godhead.

3. The apostles seem to make a petition to Christ for spiritual mercies in a way of divine worship, *Luke* xvii. 5, *and the apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith;* which address seems to have more of the appearance of religious worship paid to him by them, than any other expression I know of before the resurrection of Christ.

Yet some would question whether this petition did evidence their firm belief of his godhead: For when they had seen him put forth his miraculous power on the bodies of men in such a glorious manner, when they found that he knew the thoughts of their hearts,* and had an inward acquaintance with their souls, which appeared in several instances, and when they had seen and heard him forgive sins, *Matt.* ix. 2, and *Luke* v. 20, perhaps they might imagine that God had given him this spiritual power over their souls, and that he was commissioned to exercise this power, even as he commissioned his disciples to *heal the sick*, to *raise the dead, &c.* Matt. x. 8, and to forgive sins, *John* xx. 23, though he were not in his own nature the true and eternal God. For it is remarkable, that when he forgave the sins of the man whom he healed of the palsy, though the scribes and pharisees said, *Who can forgive sins but God?* and so charged him with blasphemy; yet the multitude only *marvelled and glorified God, who had given such power unto men;* Matt. ix. 8. Now the multitude spoke honestly the sense of their hearts, but the scribes stretched his conduct to an accusation of blasphemy.

There is a parallel case in *Mark* ix. 17, 22, where the man brought his son who was possessed with the devil, to our blessed Lord; *Master*, says he, *if thou canst do any*

* The mere knowledge of their thoughts was not sufficient to prove the divinity of Christ, since God has been pleased in former times to communicate this knowledge to his prophets; so Ahijah knew the thoughts of Jeroboam's wife, for God had told him; 1 Kings xiv. 5, 6, *The Lord said to Ahijah, Behold, the wife of Jeroboam cometh to ask a thing of thee, &c.* And much less can we suppose the disciples in that day of darkness and ignorance did from thence infer his deity. Yet I think that expression of Christ, Rev. ii. 23, *The churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and the hearts,* compared with *Jer.* xi. 20, and xvii. 10, gives us a good argument for his deity, or that he is one with that God who searches the heart as his peculiar prerogative; but this was long after his ascent to heaven.

thing, have compassion on us, and help us. Here it is evident, that the man had not so much as a firm belief whether Christ could work this miracle or no, much less can he be supposed to believe that Christ was the true and eternal God: Then presently afterwards he cried out, *Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief.* Now the utmost that we can reasonably imagine his sudden faith arrived at, was a belief that Christ was able to cast out the devil, and cure his son; yet he desires Christ to help his unbelief. Now the mere sudden expression of this request will hardly prove the poor man was convinced of the godhead of Christ; for it is possible he might mean only, " shew thy power, and give some further testimony to assist my faith." But if he did believe Christ's deity, then we must suppose him transported by a sudden divine impulse beyond the general faith of the apostles themselves, and carried above the dispensation of that day.

4. The disciples may seem to own his omniscience, John xvi. 30, *Now we are sure that thou knowest all things, &c.* but probably at that time they understood this " all things" in a limited sense; as 2 *Sam.* xiv. 20, where the woman said the same thing to David; so 1 John ii. 20, *Ye have an unction—and know all things;* and *verse* 27. For the utmost inference the disciples make from it was, that Jesus *came forth from God*, verse 30, not that he was God himself. It may be another reason also to think the disciples understood this word " all things" in a limited sense, because Christ himself had told them but a very little before this time, that " he himself did not know the day of judgment;" *Matt.* xxiv. 36; and *Mark* xiii. 32.

Though I think it reasonable for us to go farther than they did, and to apply several of the things I have mentioned to his godhead, *viz.* his knowing their thoughts, his forgiveness of sins, &c. because we have a full account of these and many other transactions of Christ, and we know so much of his divinity and glory from other parts of the Bible; yet whether the disciples in that day did infer his divinity from any of these foregoing occurrences, and applied them to him as to the true God, may bear a just doubt and inquiry.

5. They believed that he was the Messiah; and the Messiah is spoken of in several places of the Old Testament, under the character and titles of the true God. But as we cannot find that the learned doctors of that age did generally understand those prophecies, or believe the true deity of the Messiah, so neither do we find any hint in the history of the gospel that the apostles themselves, before the death of Christ, understood these prophecies, so far as to apply them to the Messiah in that sense; but only thought him to be the greatest of prophets, and to be the appointed king of Israel, and their Saviour.

6. They believed and confessed him to be the Son of God: But this title does not necessarily amount to any more than a glorious likeness to God, a nearer and more peculiar relation to God, a special office of Messiahship, and a more eminent derivation of his human nature from God than any other creatures, either angels or men, who are called the sons of God, could ever pretend: This I think is made pretty evident in another Dissertation.

Thus I have mentioned the fairest and strongest evidences that I can find of any degree of faith or belief that the disciples had of the deity of Christ during his life, and it is possible they might sometimes have a glimpse of that glorious doctrine.

SECTION V.

WHAT EVIDENCE THEY GAVE OF DISBELIEVING HIS TRUE DEITY.

V. THE last thing I proposed was to shew, "what indications the disciples gave during the life-time of Christ of their disbelief of his godhead, or at least of the uncertainty of their faith in that matter."

1. If they had a firm and steady belief that he was the true God, surely we should have found them upon some occasion or another evidently expressing their faith in this matter, both for their own and their master's interest and honour; since we never find that he forbid them to publish this to the world, though he did forbid them to publish some of his miracles, his transfiguration, his own prophecies of his death, resurrection, and ascension, &c.

And if they had not thought proper to publish to the world, that their master was the true God, yet we have much reason to suppose that, if they had believed it, they would, upon some occasion or other before his death, have addressed him as Thomas did after his resurrection, *My Lord and my God*, John xx. 28.

We cannot but suppose also, that amongst their many doubts and queries, they would have asked him this obvious and important one: "How could he be God, and his Father be God also, and yet not two Gods?" But we find nothing of this kind, though they put many a question to him, both of less difficulty and less importance.

Nor do we find that they talked of him to the world under any character of godhead; but on the contrary, we always find them speaking of him as *a man*, and that not only in his life-time, but just after his death too, as *a great prophet*, that was risen up amongst them: Luke xxiv. 19, *Jesus of Nazareth, a prophet mighty in word and deed before God and all the people.*

2. If they had believed him to be the true God, that made the heavens and the earth, the winds and the seas, they would never have expressed so much surprise and wonder at his rebuking the wind, and bidding the sea be calm; Luke viii. 24, 25, *They being afraid, wondered, saying one to another, What manner of man is this? for he commandeth even the winds and water, and they obey him!* I confess the word *man* is not the original; but still their wonder at the obedience that was paid him by the elements, seems an argument that they did not believe him to be the almighty God that made them.

Now this is not the first time they were thus astonished and surprised; for when Simon Peter, a good while before this, let down his net, at the command of Christ, and enclosed a great multitude of fishes, he was astonished, and all that were with him; *Luke* v. 9. And if any of them may seem to have a glimpse of his divinity on this occasion, yet they had forgot or lost it again, when, in *chap.* viii. they were as much surprised at his rebuking the winds and the waves.

You have another instance of this kind, *Matt.* xxi. 19, 20: "And when the disciples saw that the fig-tree which our Lord cursed, presently withered, they marvelled, saying, How soon is the fig-tree withered away!" And this was not long before his death neither, when we may suppose their knowledge was most advanced; whereas the

disciples would never have marvelled that he could destroy a fig-tree by a word, if they had believed him to be that God who made all things by his word.

3. If they had believed Christ to be the great and glorious God, they would not have treated him with such an indecent roughness, as they did upon some particular occasions; as *Matt.* xv. 33, when Christ said, he would *not send away* the people *fasting, lest they faint in the way,* the disciples made him a very rude reply, to say no worse of it, when they answered, *Whence should we have so much bread in the wilderness, as to fill so great a multitude!*

Another instance of this kind appears in their free and unbecoming address to Jesus, Matt. xv. 12, *Then came his disciples, and said to him, Knowest thou that the pharisees were offended after they heard this saying?* without so much as sir, or master, to preface it. Whereby it is plain, they either at that time doubted whether he knew what offence the pharisees took, or else they gave him a reproof for speaking such things as should offend the pharisees, and a caution lest he did it again. But either of these suppositions sufficiently manifest they did not believe him to be the true God.

So when he spake of his death and resurrection, Matt. xvi. 22, it is said, *Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, This shall not be unto thee, Lord.* Now we can hardly suppose that Peter would have been so free as to take up such language to his great Creator, and to give such a rebuke to his God.

I might add also, that though the virgin Mary, under the influence of rapture and inspiration, expresses herself thus, Luke i. 47, *My spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour,* yet if she had firmly believed her Son to be her God, she would not have chid him so severely, when he was twelve years old, Luke ii. 48, *Son, why hast thou dealt thus with us?* because he stayed in the temple, and was left behind, when they travelled homeward.

4. If they had thought Jesus Christ was the "true God, they would never have tried to entertain the curiosity of their master, by shewing him how magnificent the buildings of the temple were;" Matt. xxiv. 1, *His disciples came to him, for to shew him the buildings of the temple;* and one of them said to him, *Master, see what manner of stones, and buildings, are here,* Mark xiii. 1; and, as St. Luke expresses it, *how it was adorned with goodly stones,* Luke xxi. 5. They must needs know this was but a poor entertainment to please that glorious Being, who had formed and built this earth, and had spread abroad the starry canopy of the heavens.

5. They had frequent opportunity of observing that Christ knew their thoughts, and on this occasion they once took notice, John xvi. 30, and said, *Now we are sure that thou knowest all things.* Now if they had been convinced that he was the true God, they would certainly have declared their sense and faith of his godhead, and not have contented themselves with this poor inference, *by this we believe that thou camest forth from God;* that is, "thou hadst a being, or didst dwell with the Father, and art come from him." And even when they arose to this degree of belief, our Lord takes notice, that their faith had not been very long advanced so far as this, or at least, it had not been long established and firmly rooted in this point: For verse 31, *Jesus answered them, Do ye now believe?*

After all, I might observe this also concerning Martha and Mary, who were well acquainted with Jesus, and for whom he had a peculiar and special affection, as well as for Lazarus their brother, *John* xi. 6; and he had so far acquainted them with his

person and office, that they "believed him to be the Christ, or Messiah, the Son of God, which should come into the world," *verse* 27. Yet neither of them speak of any faith they had, that he had power in himself to raise the dead, though Jesus seems to have urged them to it, *verse* 25. The utmost faith which they express is this: *Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died*, verses 21 and 32; and verse 22, *I know that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee.*

Upon the whole survey of things, it appears that the disciples during the life of Christ had not arrived to any firm belief of his godhead: And if at any time they had a glimspe of his deity, it seems rather to be under the influence of a surprise and rapture, beyond the level of that imperfect dispensation, and beyond the common exercise of their faith in that day.

And indeed Thomas seems to be under the power of such a divine rapture, when, even after the resurrection of Christ, he was favoured with so sensible a conviction, and he cried out, John xx. 28, *My Lord and my God;* which is the first plain and certain indication of any of the apostles believing the deity of Christ.

These things will give occasion to three or four more questions, *viz.*

Question I. "Did the disciples believe him then to be a mere common man?"

Answer. No, I think not: For it is very probable that they were informed of his extraordinary conception, and his birth, of the virgin Mary his mother, so that he came into the world in a diviner way, and superior to other men, having God himself for the Father even of his flesh: And thus "the holy thing that was born of the virgin was called *the Son of God*," Luke i. 35.

It is probable also that they believed that sublime and near relation in which his soul stood to God, being the Son of God in a superior sense to all other men, even before his incarnation; and that he had a pre-existent state, where he dwelt with God, and whence he "came forth from God, when he came into this world," *John* xvi. 27, 28. Thus he was eminently *the Son of God*, as to his body and his soul.

They also believed him to be the Messiah, their anointed king, and the highest and greatest of all the prophets, the Redeemer of Israel, and their Saviour, and that in this sense also he was the Son of God.

They knew him also to be endued with the Spirit of God in a most glorious and eminent degree; or, as John the Baptist expresses it, to have "the Spirit given him without measure," *John* iii. 34.

And they knew the peculiar and intimate presence of the Father was with him, which he so often taught them in express words; *John* xiv. 10, 11. x. 30, that "the Father was in him, and he in the Father;" and that "he and the Father were one;" yet they did scarce arrive at the belief of a personal union of the human nature with the divine.

All these things, joined together, exalted his character in their esteem, far above the common level of mankind.

Question II. If they did not believe the godhead of Christ, who had such special advantages above other men, "may it not well be doubted whether there were sufficient proofs of his divinity ever given to mankind before his death?"

Answer I. By several Scriptures of the Old Testament, I think the godhead of the Messiah might have been proved, and when they had compared these prophecies with the actions and life of Christ, they had plain evidences that he was this Messiah:

The disciples therefore might have had reasonable ground to have inferred this doctrine of his deity. But so ignorant was that generation, so over-run with national mistakes, so unacquainted with Scripture, and the true meaning of it, that the apostles in that day did not believe many other things concerning Christ, which were written in the Old Testament in as plain and express language as his godhead. Such were the predictions of his sorrows and sufferings, his death and his rising again, and his final exaltation: But we have Christ's own words for it, even after he rose again, that they were *fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken,* Luke xxiv. 25.

Answer II. Some of the speeches which Christ made concerning himself do certainly represent him in too sublime a character for any mere creature; which I have mentioned before: And by some circumstances of his conduct, they might have found out his godhead, especially if they had compared them with his character as Messiah. But they laboured under the power of many prejudices, and as our Lord often charges them, that they were dull of apprehension, hard to be instructed, and *slow to believe.*

Answer III. Though there might be a bare external sufficiency in the notices that Christ gave of his own godhead for their conviction, yet these were made more abundantly clear and evident to them, when, according to the promise of Christ, "his Spirit brought to remembrance," and explained the things that he had before said to them; then he "took of the things of Christ, and revealed them" to his apostles, as he promised, *John* xiv. 26, and xvi. 14.

I might add also, that all these notices and evidences of the divinity of Christ, stand in a much fairer light before us who have the whole history of the life, death, and resurrection of Christ; and the writings and sermons of the apostles, to compare with the writings of the prophets; which it was not possible the disciples should do in so complete a manner, and to so great satisfaction, during the life of Christ, had they been ever so sagacious, and ever so well prepared.

Question III. "How could the disciples trust in him as their Saviour, and commit their souls to him for salvation in his life-time, if they had not a firm faith in his godhead?"

Answer I. The way whereby the fathers before Christ were saved, was not so much by a direct act of faith on the person of the Messiah, who was to come, as by the direct and immediate exercise of faith or trust on the mercy of God, as it was to be revealed in and through the Messiah in due time. Now the dispensation of those three or four years which past during the life of Christ, was a sort of medium between the law and gospel; and the acts and exercises of the apostles' faith or trust and dependence, like that of the patriarchs, might be more directly placed on the mercy of God himself for salvation, as it had begun to manifest itself in and by Jesus the Messiah, now come into the world. So St. Peter expresses it, 1 Peter i. 21, *You who by him do believe in God.*

Though they were frequently called to believe in Christ, yet you find they were so unskilled in a direct act of divine faith on him, that our Lord was fain to repeat the command with great solemnity but just before his death. John xiv. 1, *Ye believe in God, believe also in Me;* as if he should have said, "Ye have a long time trusted and professed your faith in God and his mercy, make Me now also the direct object of your faith or trust, as ye have made God the Father."

Answer II. Under the great darkness and confusion of their notions in that season of

twilight, they sometimes paid too little honour to Christ, because they had too low an esteem of him; and sometimes the honour they paid him through the influence of rapture and surprise, though not too high in itself, yet it might be above and beyond the clear discernment of their understandings and their own settled judgment concerning him. Thus they might now and then exert some faint acts of divine faith on him, while in the main they were doubtful of his godhead. But a gracious God makes great allowances for such weaknesses in faith and practice, where the divine discoveries which he makes to men have but imperfect degrees of light and evidence.

Question IV. "Does it not follow then, if the disciples were in a state of grace, and yet doubted of the deity of Christ; surely the deity of Christ was not a fundamental article in that day?"

Answer I. Fundamentals are different, in different seasons and times, nations and ages; for as God makes more or less discoveries of divine truth to men, so more or less is necessary to be believed in order to salvation.

Surely it was not a fundamental article for Peter to know and believe the sufferings and death of Christ as a sacrifice for sin, and his resurrection from the dead, at that time when he rebuked our Saviour himself, because he spake of his dying, *Matt.* xvi. 22. And when none of the apostles knew *what rising from the dead should mean*, as *Mark* ix. 10, yet the belief of the death and resurrection of Christ was certainly a fundamental article, and necessary to salvation in a little time afterward; and is become necessary to Christianity itself; 1 Cor. xv. 14, 17, *If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain;—ye are yet in your sins.*

The doctrine of the divinity of Christ, therefore, may not be supposed to be a fundamental article in the time of Christ's life, because we have reason to believe the apostles were in a state of grace and salvation, before there is any sufficient evidence of their faith therein: But it will not follow thence, that the same doctrine either is or is not a fundamental, after it has been more fully and clearly revealed by the complete writings of the New Testament; and indeed a truth ought to be revealed very plainly and with convincing evidence, before it can be ever called a fundamental.

It has been the constant method of divine wisdom, in all ages, to communicate to man the glorious discoveries of the grace of God by slow and gentle degrees, and not to overwhelm our faculties at once with a flood of divine light. He knows the weakness of our frame, he knows how dark are our understandings, how feeble our judgments, how many and great our natural prejudices, and how hard it is to surmount them; and he demands our belief in measures answerable to his discoveries. It is according to the growing evidence of any divine revelation, and the gradual advantages that any man has to know and understand that revelation, that God justly expects the growing exercises of our faith.

Thus that faith which is necessary to salvation, consists of more or fewer articles, according to the different ages of the church, and different degrees of revelation and divine light.

Thus though our Lord Jesus Christ was true God when he came first to be manifest in the flesh, yet the complete glory of his person and the beams of his godhead did not discover themselves in a triumphant and convincing light during the days of his humiliation; and though it was necessary then, to all those who had a clear knowledge of his doctrine and miracles, to believe that he was the Messiah *'If ye believe not that I*

am He, ye shall die in your sins, John viii. 24); yet it doth not seem at that time to have been made necessary to believe his deity, since the discoveries of it were but imperfect, and it is plain that his own apostles hardly believed it.

It is certain, that after the resurrection of Christ, and the days of Pentecost, the apostles by degrees had more divine light let into their souls by the Holy Spirit, whereby they arrived at a fuller knowledge of the glory of his person and his godhead; yet it is very probable that the idea which I have before described, is the highest they attained in his life-time; and that not only on the account of the arguments I have used already, but because this notion was so fixed and rooted in their minds, that they generally described our Lord Jesus Christ in this manner, in all their first ministrations of the gospel, and they thought it proper to teach others in the same manner as they had learned. So St. Peter, *Acts* ii. 22, tells the men of Israel, *Jesus of Nazareth* was *a man approved of God among you, by miracles, and wonders, and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves know;* ver. 24, *whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death.*

Again, Acts iii. 13, *The God of our fathers hath glorified his Son Jesus, whom ye delivered up, &c.* And he cites Moses to shew what he was, ver. 22, *A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me.* So when he preached to Cornelius, a Roman, Acts x. 38, *God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power, who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him, &c.*

And St. Paul himself preached Christ under this inferior character at first, though he came not a whit behind the chiefest of the apostles in knowledge; 2 *Cor.* xii. 11, and *Gal.* ii. 6. In his sermon at Athens, he says, *God hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead;* Acts xvii. 31. Thus they began with the human nature and the offices of Christ, and the peculiar assisting presence of God with him, before they taught any thing of the mystery of his own godhead or personal union with the divine nature.

And indeed there is a good deal of reason why they should not at first reveal and display the glorious doctrine of the Trinity and the godhead of Jesus, though they had known it ever so well. It was not fit they should break in all at once upon the blind jewish nation, nor upon the blinder gentiles, with the blaze of Christ's divinity. For, to speak humanly, it would have filled the minds of strangers with surprising doubts and scruples, and raised in them an utter prejudice against all further attention to the gospel, if they had been told at first of three persons who were each of them the true God, and yet all three but one God.* This was not proper to be the very first lesson in

* There is a remarkable instance to this purpose in the *Conferences of the Danish Missionaries with the Heathens of Malabar.* The missionary speaking of the Son of God, the Malabarian replied, "Who is his Son? and, Is he also God?" *Missionary.* "He is God, blessed for ever." *Malabarian.* "But pray, Sir, recollect yourself: Have not you been just now inveighing against plurality of gods? And now, I find, you have yourselves more than one; the Father is God, and the Son is God; then you have two gods." *Missionary.* "We do not believe two gods, but one only God; though at the same time, we firmly believe, that there are three persons in one divine essence; and yet these three persons are not three, but one God: And this we believe as a great mystery," &c. And then he goes on to explain it by the understanding and the will proceeding from the soul, which are yet really one and the same thing with the soul. Upon which the Malabarian makes this reply: "I find," said he, "that you, with your subtile ways of arguing, can make a trinity consistent with unity; and if your explication is absolutely necessary to make others understand what you mean, pray allow us the same advantage of explaining the doctrine of our

Christianity. The great work of the conversion of the world was done by degrees, as human nature could bear. Thus God hath treated men in all ages, and led them on *from faith to faith*, Rom. i. 17. Thus our Lord Jesus Christ treated his disciples, John xvi. 12, *I have yet many things to say to you, but ye cannot bear them now.* And thus the apostles treated the Jews and gentiles, to whom they preached; 1 Cor. iii. 2, and *fed them with milk and not with meat, for they were not able to bear it.* Thus by slow degrees they led them from the knowledge of Jesus the Son of man, to the knowledge of Jesus the Son of God; from the discovery of Jesus the prophet, to the discovery of Jesus the Messiah, the priest, and the king; from the revelation of Christ the Saviour of men, to the revelation of Christ the eternal life and the true God; from the doctrine of the presence of God with him, to the doctrine of his personal union with godhead, " in whom dwells all the fulness of the godhead bodily," *Col.* ii. 9, and who is *God over all, blessed for ever*, Rom. ix. 5, by virtue of this glorious and personal union with the eternal God.

QUESTION III.

COULD THE SON OF GOD PROPERLY ENTER INTO A COVENANT WITH HIS FATHER, TO DO AND SUFFER WHAT WAS NECESSARY TO OUR REDEMPTION, WITHOUT A HUMAN SOUL?

SECTION I.

IT is granted that the generality of our christian writers believe, that it was only the divine nature or godhead of Christ had an existence before he was conceived by the virgin Mary, and became incarnate; yet whensoever they would represent the exceeding great love of the Father in sending his Son into our world, that he might suffer and die for us, and when they would describe the transcendent love of Christ, in his coming into our world, and his submitting to death for our sakes, they usually represent it in such language as can never agree to his divine nature in any propriety of speech, but only to the pre-existent human soul of Christ, with its descent into flesh and blood, and the sufferings of this human soul for us. And it is evident that the Scripture itself leads them plainly to such a representation of things: So that while they are explaining the transcendent degree of the love of God and Christ to sinners, according to Scripture, they are led by the force of truth into such expressions as are indeed hardly consistent with their own professed opinions, but perfectly consistent with the revelation of Scripture, and the doctrine of the pre-existent soul of Christ.

religion, and putting it in the most favourable light we can, for the excluding the absurdities imputed to us. And this once granted us, it will follow, that our plurality does not destroy the unity of God, no more than your trinity does. We worship the gods upon no other account, than because they are the vicegerents of the Almighty, whose administration he employs in governing the world, as he did employ them at the beginning, in creating and forming the same. And our God appearing among men at sundry times, under different shapes, had at every apparition a different name given him, which contributed very much to the multiplying of the number of our images; whereas in truth, they are but different representations of the same God, under different aspects and appearances." See *Conference*, Number XI. Now if the apostles had dealt so imprudently with the heathens or with the Jews, by preaching the doctrine of the Trinity at first in the fullest expressions, they had embarrassed the minds of their hearers, and exposed themselves and their doctrine of salvation by Jesus the Messiah to such difficulties and wrangling disputations. But you find no controversies of this kind raised in their first preaching.

I was lately looking into the sermons of that most excellent practical and evangelical writer, the late Mr. John Flavel, in his treatise called *The Fountain of Life Opened; or, a Display of Christ;* where I found the following expressions:

Sermon II. page 13, in quarto, where the excellent author is describing the glorious condition of the non-incarnate Son of God, he says, "Christ was not then abased to the condition of a creature, but it was an inconceivable abasement to the absolute independent being to come under the law; yea, not only under the obedience, but also under the malediction and curse of the law; Gal. iv. 4, *God sent forth his Son; made of a woman; made under the law.*"

Page 14, "He was never pinched with poverty and wants while he continued in that bosom, as he was afterwards. Ah, blessed Jesus! Thou needest not to have wanted a place to have lain thy head, hadst thou not left that bosom for my sake." And here the author quotes Mr. Anthony Burges, in his *Lectures on John:* "He that was in the bosom of the Father, and had the most intimate, close, and secret delight and love from the Father, how unspeakable is it that he should deprive himself of the sense of it, to put himself, as it were, out of heaven into hell!" Mr. Flavel then proceeds, "He never underwent reproach and shame in that bosom: There was nothing but glory and honour reflected upon him by his Father, though afterward he was *despised and rejected of men.* All the while he lay in that bosom of peace and love, he never knew what it was to be assaulted with temptations, to be besieged and battered upon by unclean spirits, as he did afterwards: The Lord embraced him from eternity, but never wounded him till he stood in our place and room. There were no hidings or withdrawments of his Father from him; there was not a cloud from eternity upon the face of God till Jesus Christ had left that bosom. It was a new thing to Christ to see frowns in the face of his Father. There were never any impressions of his Father's wrath upon him, as there were afterward. There was no death to which he was subject in that bosom. All these things were new things to Christ; he was above them all, till for our sakes he voluntarily subjected himself unto them."

Then after the author has shewn how great was the intimacy, the dearness, the delight, which was between the Father and the Son, considered in their divine nature, he draws some inferences, page 17:—

"*Inference* I. What an astonishing act of love was this, for the Father to give the delight, the darling of his soul, out of his very bosom, for poor sinners! Never did any child lie so close to a parent's heart as Christ did to his Father's! And yet he willingly parts with him, though his only one, the Son of his delight; and that to death, a cursed death, for the worst of sinners. O matchless love! A love past finding out! If the Father had not loved thee, he had never parted with such a Son for thee."

"*Inference* II. Adore, and be for ever astonished at the love of Jesus Christ to poor sinners, that ever he should consent to leave such a bosom, and the ineffable delights that were there, for such poor worms as we are. O the heights, depths, lengths, and breadths of unmeasurable love! 'It is admirable,' says Mr. Burges *on John* xvii. 'that Christ should not only put himself out of comfort, but out of that manifested honour and glory he might have retained to himself.' If ever you found by experience what it is to be in the bosom of God by divine communion, would you be persuaded to leave such a bosom for all the good that is in the world? And yet Jesus Christ, who was embraced in that bosom after another manner than ever you were

acquainted with, freely left it, and laid down the glory and riches he enjoyed there, for your sakes. *What manner of love is this?* Who ever loved as Christ loves? Who ever denied himself for Christ, as Christ denied himself for us?" Then after the third inference, he adds:

"*Inference* IV. How worthy is Jesus Christ of all our love and delight! He that left God's bosom for you, deserves a place in your bosoms."

"*Exhortation.* If Christ lay eternally in this bosom of love, and yet was content to forsake and leave it for your sakes, then be you ready to forsake and leave all the comforts you have on earth, for Christ."

Again, *Sermon* IV. page 35, "Consider how near and dear Jesus Christ was to the Father: He was his Son, his only Son, saith the text: The Son of his love: The darling of his soul: His other self; yea, one with himself: *The express image of his person: The brightness of his Father's glory:* In parting with him, he parted with his own heart, with his very bowels, as I may say. Yet *to us a Son is given,* Isaiah ix. 6. And such a Son as he calls his dear Son."

Now if we suppose the human soul of our Lord Jesus Christ to have had a pre-existent state of joy and glory in the bosom of the Father through all former ages of the world, and even before the world was created, then these expressions are great and noble, are just and true, and have a happy aptness and propriety in them to set forth the transcendent love of God the Father in sending his Son, and the transcendent love of Christ, the Son of God, in coming from heaven, and leaving the joys and glories of his Father's immediate presence in heaven, to take on him such flesh and blood as ours is, and in that flesh and blood to sustain shame, sorrow, pain, anguish of flesh and spirit, sharp agonies, and the pangs of death.

And this love is exceedingly enhanced, while we consider that this human soul of Christ was personally united to this divine nature; so that hereby God himself is joined to flesh and blood; *God* becomes *manifest in the flesh,* 1 Tim. iii. 16.

But on the other hand, if we suppose nothing but the pure divine nature of Christ to exist before his incarnation, then all these expressions seem to have very little justness or propriety in them: For the divine nature of Christ, how distinct soever it is supposed to be from God the Father, yet can never leave the Father's bosom, can never divest itself of any one joy or felicity that it was ever possessed of, nor lose even the least degree of it; nor could God the Father ever dismiss the divine nature of his Son from his own bosom. Godhead must have eternal and complete beatitude, joy, and glory, and can never be dispossessed of it. Godhead can sustain no real sorrow, suffering, or pain. The utmost that can be said concerning the deity of Christ is, that there is a relative imputation of the sorrows, sufferings, and pains of the human nature, to the divine, because of the union between them; so that the sufferings acquire a sort of divine dignity and merit hereby: It is granted indeed that this relative and imputative suffering may be sufficient in a legal sense to advance the dignity of the sacrifice of Christ, to a complete and equivalent satisfaction for sin; yet the exceeding greatness of the love of the Father and the Son does not seem to be so sensibly manifested to us hereby, for all this abasement of the godhead of Christ is merely relative, and not real.

And as it is plain that the divine nature of Christ could not be separated from the

bosom of his Father, when he came into this world and took flesh upon him, so neither could the human nature leave this bosom of the Father, if it had no prior existence, and was never there. Therefore, in the common scheme, all this glorious and pathetic representation of the love of Christ, in leaving the joys and glories of heaven, when he came to dwell upon earth, has no ideas belonging to it, and it can be true in no sense, since it can neither be attributed to the human nor to the divine nature of Christ, nor to his whole person. I grant that by the figure of communication of properties, what is true of one nature may be attributed to the whole person, or sometimes to the other nature; yet that which is not true concerning either nature of Christ separated, nor concerning the two natures united, cannot be attributed to him at all: So that "parting with the bosom of his Father," and "forsaking the joys and glories he possessed there," are, according to the common scheme, words of which we have no ideas.

But now if we conceive the soul of Christ in its pre-existent state, as the first-born of every creature, the darling of the soul of God, who, as it were, lay in the bosom of the Father, to come forth from the Father and come into this world, *John* xvi. 28; to part with the joys and glories it was possessed of there before the foundation of the world, *John* xvii. 5; to dwell in a feeble mansion of flesh and blood, pain and sorrow, to be cramped and confined in human limbs, and to sustain the pangs and punishment of a cursed death on the cross, for the sake of rebellious creatures; this is amazing love indeed; this has a surprising and sensible reality in it, and should awaken all the powers of our souls, to admire and adore both God the Father for sending his Son Jesus Christ, and Christ himself for consenting to such an abasement.

SECTION II.

IT has been made evident in the foregoing Section, that our best divines, following the track of Scripture light and the sacred dictates of the word of God, have set the transcendent love of God the Father in sending his Son, and the love of Christ in his incarnation and death, in a most beautiful and affecting light, if we suppose the soul of Christ to have had a pre-existent state of joy and glory with the Father before the world was. But I fear their expressions are scarce consistent with any clear or just ideas or conceptions, while they deny each part of the human nature of Christ, that is, his soul as well as his body, to exist before his incarnation.

There is yet another and very remarkable instance wherein our protestant divines, in a very just and affecting manner, represent the covenant of redemption between the Father and the Son according to Scripture, upon the supposition of the pre-existence of Christ's human soul: But according to the common or scholastic explication of the distinction of persons in the Trinity, and the denial of this pre-existent soul of Christ, we can have no ideas under all their glorious and affectionate representations of this transaction between the Father and the Son. Let us inquire a little into this matter.

The common or scholastic explication of the Trinity, which has been long universally received by our protestant writers, and has been called orthodox for these several hundred years, is this, *viz.* That God is but one simple, infinite, and eternal Spirit: Thence it follows, that the divine essence, powers, and essential properties of the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, in the godhead, are numerically the very same essence, powers, and essential properties: That it is the same numerical consciousness,

understanding, will, and power, which belongs to the Father, that belongs also to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; and that the sacred Three are distinguished only by the superadded relative properties of paternity, filiation, and procession; but their thoughts, ideas, volitions, and agencies, according to this hypothesis, must be the very same numerical thoughts, ideas, actions, and volitions, in all the sacred Three.

Now having these excellent Sermons of Mr. Flavel before me, who has well represented this doctrine of the covenant of redemption, and the transactions between God the Father and his Son, before the world was, I would cite some part of that discourse, in order to shew how well his representation of this matter agrees with the doctrine of the pre-existent soul of Christ, though it can never agree to the common explication of the Trinity without it. See Sermon III. page 23, &c.

" 1. Consider the persons transacting and dealing with each other in this covenant: These are God the Father, and God the Son: The former as a creditor, the latter as a surety: The Father stands upon satisfaction, the Son engages to give it.

" 2. Consider the business transacted between them, and that was the redemption and recovery of all God's elect.

" 3. The manner or quality of this transaction: It was federal, or in the nature of a covenant: It was by mutual engagements and stipulations, each person undertaking to perform his part in order to our recovery. The Father promiseth that he will " hold his hand and keep him," *Isaiah* xlii. 6. The Son promiseth he will obey his Father's call to suffering, and not be rebellious, *Isaiah* l. 5, and having promised, each holds the other to his engagement.

" 4. Consider the articles to which they both agree: God the Father promises to invest him with a threefold office, *viz.* to make him a Priest; Psalm cx. 4, *The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedec.* Heb. v. 5, *Christ glorified not himself to be made a high-priest, but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son.* God the Father promises to make him a prophet; Isaiah xlii. 6, 7, *I will give thee for a light to the gentiles; to open the blind eyes:* And to make him a king, Psalm li. 6, 7; *Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thy inheritance,* verse 8. Further the Father promised to stand by him, assist him, and strengthen him for this work: Isaiah xlii. 5, 6, 7, *I will hold thy hand;* that is, " I will underprop and support thy humanity, when it is ready to sink under the burthen." He promiseth to crown his work with success, to accept him in his work, and to reward him for it with great exaltation; Psalm ii. 7, *I will declare the decree; the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.* It is spoken of the day of his resurrection, when he had just finished his suffering, and so the apostle expounds and applies it, *Acts* xiii. 33; and in *Heb.* xii. 2, this was *the joy that was set before him,* which encouraged him ' to endure the cross and despise the shame.'

" In like manner Jesus Christ re-stipulates, and gives his engagement to the Father, that upon these terms he is content to be made flesh, to divest himself as it were of his glory, to come under the obedience and malediction of the law, and not to refuse any the hardest sufferings it should please the Father to inflict on him." Psalm xl. 7, 8, *Then said I, Lo, I come—I delight to do thy will, O my God.*

" 5. These articles were by both parties performed precisely and punctually.

" 6. This compact between the Father and the Son, bears date from eternity, before this world was made: While as yet we had no existence, but only in the infinite mind

and purpose of God; 2 *Tim.* i. 9, 'The grace which was given us in Christ before the world began,' was this grace of redemption, which from everlasting was thus contrived and designed for us. Then was the council or consultation of peace between them both, as some take that Scripture, *Zech.* vi. 13."

Page 28, "God the Father, and God the Son, do mutually rely and trust to one another in the business of our redemption. The Father relies upon the Son for the performance of his part. The Father so far trusted Christ, that upon the credit of his promise to come into the world, and in the fulness of time to become a sacrifice for the elect, he saved all the Old Testament saints. And so doth Christ in like manner depend upon, and trust his Father for the accomplishment of all this promise, that he shall see his seed; and that all the elect that are yet behind, yet unregenerated, as well as those already called, shall be preserved to the heavenly kingdom."

Page 29, this excellent author represents this transaction, between the Father and the Son before the world was, in a way of dialogue: He supposes the Father to say, "My Son, here be a company of poor miserable souls, that have utterly undone themselves, and now lie open to my justice; justice demands satisfaction for them, or will satisfy itself in the eternal ruin of them. What shall be done for these souls? And thus Christ replies: O my Father! Such is my love to, and pity for them, that rather than they shall perish eternally, I will be responsible for them as their surety; I will rather choose to suffer thy wrath than they should suffer it; charge their debt all upon me, I am able to discharge it: And though it impoverish all my riches, and empty all my treasures, (for so it did indeed; 2 Cor. viii. 9, *Though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor)*, I am content to undertake it."

Here I again desire my reader to observe, I cite not the words of that great and excellent man to refute them, for I greatly approve of almost every expression; much less would I expose that venerable author, whose memory and writings I sincerely reverence and honour: But my design is to shew what is the usual language of our best divines on this subject, for I might cite passages of the like nature, out of a multitude of excellent writers. This is only a specimen of one for the rest.

Now in reading over such accounts of stipulations and contract between the Father and the Son, before the foundation of the world, what proper conceptions can we frame, or what clear ideas can we possibly have, while we suppose nothing but Christ's divine nature transacting this affair with the Father; and while at the same time we believe the divine essence, perfections, and powers, the understanding, will, thought, and consciousness, of the Father and of the Son to be numerically one and the same, since in the godhead, or divine nature, they are but one and the same infinite Spirit? The mere personalities, *viz.* paternity and filiation, cannot consult and transact these affairs in a way of contract, proposal, and consent: It is nothing but two distinct consciousnesses and two distinct wills can enter into such a covenant; but in the common explication of the Trinity, the distinct personalities of the Father and the Son do not make any real distinct consciousnesses or distinct wills in the one infinite Spirit.

And let it be further noted also, that according to several of the articles of this covenant, one of these beings or persons covenanting, seems to be inferior to the other, and to be capable of receiving orders, commission, support, and recompence from the other: But if only the deity of Christ existed at that time, and the deity of Christ and of the Father have but one and the same numerical consciousness and volition, one and the

same numerical power and glory, what need of orders and commissions, what need of promises of support and recompence? How can the pure godhead of Christ be supported, or be recompensed by the Father, who has eternally the same numerical glory and power?

In short, all these sacred and pathetic representations of stipulation and articles, in the common scheme, can amount to no more in our clear ideas, and in a proper conception of things, than the simple decree or volition of the one eternal infinite Spirit.

I grant we may suppose the great God, in a figurative manner of speech, consulting thus with his own wisdom, with the divine powers or principles of agency in his own nature, as a man may be figuratively said to consult with his own understanding, or reason, or conscience: But in literal and proper language, it seems to be nothing else but an absolute decree of the great God, that the man Christ Jesus, when formed and united to godhead, should undertake and fulfil this work, four thousand years after this world was made. And thus, according to the common hypothesis, that very intelligent being which was to come into flesh, and to sustain all the real sufferings, gave no such early antecedent consent to this covenant. It was only the godhead of Christ, which is impassible and could really suffer nothing, did decree that the human nature should exist hereafter, that it should be united to the godhead, and should sustain agonies and death for the sins of men.

I would inquire further also, according to this explication of things, what possible difference can we conceive between the love of the Father in sending his Son, and the love of the Son in consenting to be sent on this compassionate errand, if there were not two distinct consciousnesses, and two distinct wills, if it was only one simple numerical volition of the great God? And how doth this abate our grand ideas of the distinct and condescending love of our blessed Saviour, in his consent to this covenant, since that part of him which really suffered, that is, his inferior nature, had then no existence, and therefore could give no consent to this early covenant of redemption?

If some of these difficulties may possibly obtain any tolerable solution, by introducing many figures of speech, and be thus explained, according to the common explication of the Trinity, without supposing the pre-existence of the human soul of Christ, yet I am much inclined to think they can never be all solved or explained upon that hypothesis.

But on the other hand, if we give ourselves leave to conceive of the human soul of our Lord Jesus Christ in its pre-existent state as the πρωτότοκος, *the first-born of every creature*, Col. i. 15; as the ἀρχὴ, that is, *the beginning*, or the chief, *of the creation of God*, Rev. iii. 14; lying *in the bosom of the Father*, John i. 18; and intimately united to the eternal God; then here are proper subjects for these federal transactions in the covenant of redemption, before the foundation of the world. And a most glorious and divine covenant it was, between the Father and the Son, in this view of things, for the salvation of poor ruined man.

Though this blessed soul of Christ were united immediately to the divine nature, yet God the Father might part with it, as it were, out of his own bosom, that is, divest it of heavenly joys and glories* by its own consent, without dissolving the union: God the Father might prepare a body for it, and send it to dwell in flesh and blood: God

* *Note*, This divesting of the soul of Christ of its primitive joys and glories, does not require a dissolution of its union to the divine nature; for the godhead may be still united, and yet may influence the human soul in greater

might inflict the punishment of our sins upon this blessed soul of Christ incarnate, and afterwards give it a high exaltation, not only to the glory which it had with the Father before the world was, but to superior joys and glories as the reward of its sufferings, according to Scripture; *John* xvii. 5, and *Phil.* ii. 9.

And this blessed soul of Christ, united to godhead, is a proper subject to enter into these articles, to accept of the terms of this covenant of redemption, to consent to part with the bosom of the Father, &c. And thus Christ, when he *came forth from the Father*, and came into this world, *John* xvi. 28, laid aside that glory which he had with the Father *before the world was*, John xvii. 5; and *though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor*, 2 Cor. viii. 9. And thus the Father and the Son manifest their transcendent love to poor rebel sinners, in this federal transaction, this covenant of redemption, before time began, which is the foundation of all that was ever done in time toward the restitution of the posterity of Adam, to the favour and the image of God, and to everlasting happiness. Every thing coincides admirably well in this scheme, and answers the various expressions of Scripture on this subject, without straining the words by needless tropes and figures: It becomes so plain, that he that runs may read it, and every private Christian may understand these early grounds and foundations of his hope.

ADVERTISEMENT.

Note, In a few months will be published a large and more complete treatise on this subject, *viz. The pre-existent Soul of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

QUESTION IV.

IS THE GODHEAD OF CHRIST AND THE GODHEAD OF THE FATHER, ONE AND THE SAME GODHEAD?

THERE are several considerations which lead me to agree with this general opinion of almost all our divines in the two last centuries, *viz.* that the godhead of Christ is the same individual godhead with that of the Father; and that his divine nature is not another infinite spirit, distinct from the Father, whatsoever sublime distinctions there may be in that one infinite Spirit, one of which, *viz.* the word or wisdom, may perhaps have a more peculiar respect to the second person in the Trinity, *viz.* the Son; and the other, *viz.* the power of God, to the Holy Ghost.

1. If the divine nature of Christ be another distinct principle of self-consciousness and volition, another distinct spiritual being, or another spirit, this approaches so near to the doctrine of another god, that it is very hard to distinguish it. For so far as our ideas of arithmetic and reason can reach, this seems to be a plain truth, "If one infinite spirit be one God, two or three infinite spirits must be two or three gods."

And though the patrons of this opinion suppose these three spirits to be so nearly

or less degrees, and in various manners, as to light, support, joy, glory, &c. according to different occasions and circumstances, which must be exceeding different in a state of humiliation and of exaltation; and the manner and the degree of influence must always be determined only by the divine wisdom.

* This hath been published, and is intitled *The Glory of Christ as God-man displayed:* And may be found at the end of this Volume.

united as to be called one God, merely to avoid the charge of polytheism, yet it must be granted that this one God must then be one complex infinite being, or spirit, made up of three single infinite beings or spirits; which is such a notion of the one true God, as I think neither reason nor revelation will admit. And yet if this were the true notion of the one God, it is very strange that Scripture should not clearly and expressly reveal it.

2. The *God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*, the *God of Israel*, the *Almighty*, and *Jehovah*, is the proper style and title by which God the Father was known under the Old Testament; and it is under these titles and characters that he often appeared to the patriarchs: Yet it is agreed by all trinitarians, that it was Jesus Christ appeared to the patriarchs, and assumed this style and these titles of godhead; which we justly suppose he could not have assumed, if he had not had true godhead belonging to his complex person. And not only so, but this true godhead must also be the godhead of the Father, otherwise he could not have assumed those very titles by which God the Father was always known to the church, and by which they worshipped him as the God and Father of all. If the deity of Christ were another distinct essence or spirit, his assuming those names, whereby God the Father only was known to the Israelites, would lead them into mistake and confusion.

Objection. I know it may be objected here, that Christ's assuming the names and titles of God the Father would lead them into as much confusion and mistake, by leading them to believe that Christ was God the Father; and it may be urged yet further, that these titles, thus assumed, would prove that Christ was God, no more than that it does prove that Christ was the Father.

Answer. If Christ has the same godhead as the Father, and if in these ancient appearances Christ came in the name of the Father, as his representative, there is no great inconvenience nor confusion if he were taken for God the Father, speaking and acting in and by *the angel of the covenant*, or Jesus Christ in his pre-existent state: But there would be great confusion and inconvenience in Christ's assuming these divine names, if he had not godhead belonging to him, for then we should take a creature for God.

3. Several Scriptures of the Old Testament, which are cited by the writers of the New Testament and applied to Christ, do most evidently refer to the great *one God*, the *God of Israel*, the *Almighty*, the *Jehovah*, in the Old Testament, whom all that read the Old Testament before the days of Christ must suppose to mean God the Father of all; such as Psalm lxviii. 18, *Thou hast ascended on high*, cited *Ephes.* iv. 8; and Psalm xcvii. 7, *Worship him, all ye gods*, cited *Heb.* i. 6; and Psalm cii. 24, 25, *O my God—of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth*, cited *Heb.* i. 10; and Isaiah xl. 3, 4, 5, *Prepare ye the way of the Lord*, &c. cited *Matt.* iii. 3; and Joel ii. 32, *Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord, shall be delivered*, cited *Heb.* xii. 26; and Isaiah viii. 13, 14, *Sanctify the Lord of hosts—and he shall be for—a stone of stumbling*, cited 1 *Peter* ii. 6, 8; and several other places.

Now we cannot suppose, that all the holy men before Christ were utterly mistaken in their application of these texts to God the Father, since there is a plain and proper sense wherein this application is true. And yet these texts are properly applied to Christ, if we suppose the godhead of the Father and of Christ to be the same, and that the man Christ Jesus was the shechinah, or habitation of the great God, intimately

and personally united to him, and so made one person with him, but still under the character of filiation or mediation. And in this sense Christ was *Emmanuel*, or *God with us*, Matt. i. 23.

Besides, let it be further considered, that the design of the apostles in the citation of these texts, and the application of them to Christ, was to prove the glory, dignity, and divine grandeur of the complex person of Christ: But this citation of these texts, and the application of them to Christ, will scarce prove the godhead of Christ, unless he has the same godhead with that of the Father: Nor indeed will they prove the dignity or glory of the person of Christ any other way, but as they shew that what was spoken of old concerning the godhead of the Father must necessarily belong also to Christ.

If Christ, considered as God, were another distinct spirit from the godhead of the Father, I think these citations of the apostle out of the prophets would hardly prove his godhead; nor do I see how they could prove the grandeur and dignity of his person, unless it were granted that the godhead of the Father was his godhead, that Christ and the Father are one in this respect.

4. When Christ expresses his own godhead in the New Testament, it is by declaring his oneness with the Father, that is, the union of the man Christ Jesus with the same godhead that is in the Father, *I and the Father are one*, John x. 30. *He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father: I am in the Father, and the Father in me: The Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works*, John xiv. 9, 10. And it must be observed that there is not any place in the New Testament where the miraculous works of Christ are ascribed to any distinct godhead of his own, different from the godhead of the Father, or the godhead of the Spirit of God that dwelt in him: And it is not reasonable to suppose that Christ would have always used these modes of speaking, and attributed his own works to the Father and his Spirit, if he himself had another godhead or divine nature different from that of the Father and the Spirit: For why should his miraculous works be attributed to the aids of another infinite spirit which was not united to the man Jesus, and never be ascribed at all to that distinct spirit which is supposed to be united to him? I am sure this sort of representations lead our thoughts away from supposing Christ to have any godhead at all, if it be not the same as the Father's.

5. If the godhead of Christ be another distinct spiritual being, different from the godhead of the Father, I do not see any fair and reasonable manner, how the trinitarians can solve the difficulties which arise from those Scriptures, where God the Father is represented as the *only true God*, and under that idea distinguished from Jesus Christ; as John xvii. 3, *To know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.* 1 Cor. viii. 6, *To us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things—and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things.* Ephes. iv. 5, 6, *There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all.* Now we can scarce suppose the highest nature of Jesus Christ to be another infinite spirit distinct from God the Father, without excluding it from godhead by these express Scriptures; but they may easily be explained to admit Christ's godhead, if we suppose Christ to be spoken of in these places chiefly in his inferior characters as man and mediator; and yet he may be united to, and inhabited by the one true and eternal God, who is at other times called the Father, as being vested with different relative properties, and first in the great economy, as I have sufficiently shewn in other papers.

I add also, those texts in the prophets, where it is said, *I am God, and there is none*

else—there is none besides me—I know not any, Isaiah xliv. 6, 8, and xlv. 6, 21, 22, give a further confirmation to this sentiment. For, whether we suppose the Father or the Son to be the speaker here, it is still with an exclusion of any other being, any other spirit, from the claim of godhead besides the one infinite Spirit, the one true and eternal God, the God of Israel; and if our Saviour Jesus Christ be not that one true eternal God, that one and the same infinite Spirit with the Father, these exclusive sentences would hardly admit Christ and the Father too, to be the one true eternal God.

It is granted indeed that Christ is another spirit as he is man, and that other, *viz.* the human spirit, is not in himself properly God; but only by being united to true godhead, even the man Jesus may be so called by the communication of properties. But since the godhead of Christ is still the very same godhead with that of the Father, Christ is not excluded from godhead by these strong exclusive expressions.

6. When our Saviour foretold that his disciples should leave him alone, he adds, John xvi. 32, *And yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me.* Now if his godhead had been distinct or different from the godhead of the Father, he needed not the presence of the Father with him for his support; his own godhead would have been all-sufficient: But if his own godhead be the same with that of the Father, then there is no difficulty in the expression.

7. There are several places in the New Testament, where the words *God*, *Christ*, and the *Lord*, in the same paragraph are used very promiscuously, so that one can hardly tell where Christ is spoken of, and where God the Father, particularly, *Rom.* xiv. 6—12: Other places where God the Father and Christ are called *our Saviour*, promiscuously, and perhaps *God our Saviour*, &c. *Tit.* i. 3. ii. 13; *Jude*, verses 4, 25: At least there is some difficulty in such places to determine which is meant; which would hardly have been left liable to so promiscuous a construction, if Christ had not been true God, and if his godhead had not been the same with that of the Father.

8. That the primitive Christians worshipped Christ, is sufficiently evident from the sacred history: Yet we never find that the Jews of that day, who were implacably set against them, ever accused them of idolatry, or creature-worship, though that charge would have best served their purpose to blast and destroy this new religion.

Nor can we reasonably suppose, that if the Jews had made this objection, the sacred writers would have omitted to tell us so, because this would have been so important and forcible an objection against Christianity, that it would have required a very particular answer, that so Christians in all ages might have been taught to defend their practice.

Thence we must infer, that when the primitive Christians worshipped Christ, they cannot be supposed to worship a mere creature, or any other but the true God of Israel; for the Jews would then certainly have charged them with creature-worship or idolatry. Now this true God of Israel was God represented as the Creator, the Author, and the Father of all; it was that God who sustains the supreme character of dominion and majesty, and maintains the dignity and the rights of godhead; it was that God who so often foretold the sending of his Son Jesus Christ, and this is God the Father. It is therefore this one godhead, which is in the Father, which is the same with the godhead of his Son Jesus Christ, but under a distinct personality: It is the same one God whom the Christians worshipped, when they worshipped Christ as *God manifest in the flesh.* It was the same divine nature or godhead which the ancient Jews had been used to

worship, as dwelling in the cloud of glory upon the mercy-seat, and was now come to dwell in flesh and blood, to become *Emmanuel, God with us,* to become *God manifest in the flesh.* Now there is such a mutual inhabitation and personal union between the one eternal God and a creature, in the person of Christ, as renders this complex person a proper object of worship, and this stands clear of idolatry, even in the sense of the Jews themselves, who were wont to worship God as dwelling in the cloud.

And indeed this is the only notion of the worship of Christ that could possibly agree with their own law, and with their first commandment given in Sinai, and with all their own former ideas of worship, as due only to the one God; and it is the only notion that could have been received by them without difficulty and opposition. If therefore the Son or Word be truly God, this godhead must be the same in substance with the godhead of the Father whom the Jews worshipped, otherwise he would be another God, and the Jews would not have failed to charge the Christians with gross idolatry.

Upon the whole therefore there seems just reason to conclude, that whatever sacred and unknown distinctions may be in the divine nature itself, and however these distinctions may lay a foundation for God's discovery of himself under three personal characters, as the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, yet the godhead of the Father seems to be the same one infinite and eternal Spirit which in some particular principle or power of its own nature, or under some peculiar distinction or relation, is united to the man Christ Jesus; and hereby Jesus becomes one with God, one complex intelligent agent or person, and hereby Christ comes to have a right to those divine titles, the *Lord God,* the *Almighty, Jehovah,* the *God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob,* &c.

And by this means the great and fundamental article of all religion, "the unity of the true God," is maintained inviolable: And thus we most effectually preclude all the objections and cavils of the arian and socinian writers against the doctrine of the blessed Trinity, and the deity of Christ, as though this doctrine introduced more gods than one. For if we suppose the man Jesus Christ, in his soul and body, to be both an intellectual and corporeal shechinah, or habitation of the one God, the God of Israel, we may justly call Jesus Christ, *God manifest in the flesh,* 1 Tim. iii. 16; a man in whom *dwelleth all the fulness of the godhead bodily,* Col. ii. 9; a man *of the seed of David,* and yet *God over all, blessed for ever,* Rom. i. 3. ix. 5. Nor is there so much as the appearance or shadow of our owning two or three gods, which has been too often, and with some appearance of reason, charged upon some other modes of explaining this sacred doctrine.

QUESTION V.

IS THERE AN INTIMATE UNION BETWEEN THE LORD JESUS CHRIST AND GOD THE FATHER?

THOUGH I do not remember that the words, *unite,* or *union,** are any where found expressly in the writings of the New Testament, yet the idea, which is designed by these words is often found in Scripture: And it is the usual custom of the sacred writers to express this idea of the union of several things together by "being one

* It is granted that ἑνότης, or *unity,* is twice found in the New Testament, *viz. Ephes.* iv. 3, 13; but ἑνόω, or ἕνωσις, is not used by the sacred writers: Nor is ἑνότης used to signify the union of two things together into one.

with another," or by " one being in another," and sometimes by " each being in the other mutually."

The union between the body and the soul is represented by " the soul's being in the body," 2 Cor. v. 6, *at home in the body, &c.* The union of saints to God is expressed by mutual inbeing: 1 John iv. 16, *He that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him.* Our union to Christ is often expressed by " Christ being in us," and " our being in Christ," *John* xv. 4, 5; *Rom.* xvi. 7; and " being in the Lord," *verse* 11, and in many other places.

Sometimes union is expressed by both being one: So the saints, who are all united in one common head, are called *one body,* and *one bread,* 1 Cor. x. 17. And as the union between man and wife is expressed by their being *one flesh,* 1 Cor. vi. 16, so *he that is joined to the Lord is one Spirit,* verse 17.

The union between Jesus Christ and God the Father is expressed by all these ways, *viz.* by an inbeing of Christ in the Father, and the Father in him, and by oneness with the Father, in the writings of the apostle John. See John x. 30, *I and my Father are one;* John x. 38, and xiv. 11, *I am in the Father, and the Father in me.*

But let it be always remembered, that our union to God or Christ is but a mere faint shadow or resemblance of the union of Christ to God the Father; which vastly surpasses ours, and is of a superior kind. This union between Christ and God the Father is so near, so intimate, so peculiar, as gives occasion for the New Testament to cite and apply to Christ many passages out of the Old Testament, which relate to the God and Father of all. The names, the characters, the properties, and the actions of the Father, are given to Christ in several instances and forms of expression, which are not true, nor can be admitted concerning our union to God.

Though there be but one godhead, and " one God, even the Father," 1 *Cor.* viii. 6, yet by the intimate union of the man Christ Jesus with this one godhead or divine nature which is in the Father, Christ is the Lord Jehovah, he is *God manifest in the flesh,* 1 Tim. iii. 16; he is *God over all, blessed for ever,* Rom. ix. 5; which would be blasphemy to say concerning Christians. So Christ is *he that searches the reins and hearts,* Rev. ii. 23; Christ is the *alpha and omega, the first and the last,* Rev. i. 11. What the Father doth, the Son doth also in many respects. The Father created all things, so did the Son: And what the Son doth, the Father is said to do, John xiv. 10, *The Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.*

It may not be amiss here to transcribe a few verses from this chapter, *John* xiv. in order to give us a clearer idea of this union and communion between the Father and Christ; since it is the design of our Lord in this place to instruct Thomas and Philip in the knowledge of God the Father and of himself: John xiv. 7—11, *If ye had known me, ye would have known my Father also: And from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him.* 8. *Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us.* 9. *Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?* 10. *Believest thou not, that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words that I speak unto you, I speak not of myself: But the Father, that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.* 11. *Believe me, that I am in the Father and the Father in me; or else believe me for the very works' sake.* Upon this Scripture I beg leave to make these three remarks:

Remark I. This is not spoken concerning the union, the inbeing, or indwelling, of

any distinct divine nature of Christ in the divine nature of the Father, but rather concerning the union of his human nature to the same godhead that is in the Father; and that for these three reasons:

1. Besause the disciples at this time were not particularly acquainted with any distinct divinity of Christ, and therefore he cannot be supposed to speak to them of this his divinity, and tell them where it was, *viz.* in the Father. It was as man that he conversed with them; but as a man who had God ever with him, and he is now further explaining the intimacy of this union between God and man in his own person.

2. Though the deity of Christ, considered as the eternal word or wisdom of the Father, may be said to be or dwell in the Father, yet God the Father is not said to be in his wisdom, or to dwell in his wisdom; whereas this inbeing and indwelling of Christ and the Father are mutual in the text, *I am in the Father, and the Father in me:* It denotes the union of two really distinct beings in one.

3. Because Christ makes this his union with the Father an exemplar or similitude of the union of the saints with God; John xvii. 21, *That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee; that they also may be one in us.* The union and communion between the man Jesus and God the Father, though it is vastly superior to that of the saints, yet it is still voluntary and of mere grace, and in this respect it may be properly made use of as a very glorious exemplar fo our union to God and Christ: But the inbeing of the eternal word or wisdom in the Father is so essential to godhead, it so infinitely transcends all his voluntary and condescending union to us, and is so infinitely different from it, that it does not seem to be a proper exemplar or pattern thereof. I much rather conclude, therefore, that the union here described is the union between God the Father and the man Christ Jesus, or between the same divine nature which is in the Father and the human nature of Christ.

Remark II. Jesus Christ, neither in this place nor in any other, doth ever ascribe his divine works to any other divine power of his own, or to any other godhead of his own, distinct and different from the godhead of the Father: *I live by the Father*, John vi. 57. "The Father is in me, and it is the Father in me that doeth the works," John xiv. 10. It is but one godhead of the Father and the Son; not two divine natures or two godheads, for this would seem to make two gods. Nor has the Holy Spirit, to whom sometimes Christ ascribes his works, any godhead different from that of the Father.

Remark III. Let it be observed further, that when our Saviour tells his disciples, and particularly informs Thomas and Philip, that by "seeing and knowing the Son, they see and know the Father also," he does not give this reason for it, *viz.* that he is the very image of the Father, or the representative or the vicegerent of the Father, though those are great truths: But he gives this reason, that there is a most intimate union or oneness between the Father and him: *I am in the Father, and the Father in me.* And so near and so intimate is this union, that he attributes the words which he speaks, and the works which he does, to the Father, *verse* 10; that is, to the godhead of the Father dwelling in him. Thus "Christ and his Father are one," *John* x. 30. One godhead belongs to both.

From all this we may reasonably infer, that when the names, titles, and works of the true and eternal God are prophetically attributed to Jesus Christ under the Old Testament, or historically in the New, it is not so much because his human soul is the image, representative, or depnty of the Father, as the arians say; but because the very god-

head of the Father dwells personally in the man Jesus; "the fulness of the godhead dwells in him bodily," *Col.* ii. 9, so as on some occasions to give a sufficient ground for the representation of Christ as God-man, or one complex person including a divine and human nature; though on other occasions Christ is represented as a man, and is called *the man Christ Jesus* the *Mediator*, as in 1 *Tim.* ii. 5.

And as we find divine names and characters are given to Christ at and after his incarnation, because "the fulness of the godhead dwelt bodily in the man Jesus," *Col.* ii. 9, and thereby he became *God manifest in the flesh*, 1 Tim. iii. 16; so before his incarnation, when *the angel of the Lord*, who appeared to the patriarchs, calls himself *the Lord, God, Jehovah, God Almighty*, and *the God of Abraham*, we very reasonably account for it in the same manner, *viz.* that the fulness of the godhead dwelt in him spiritually, that is, that there was the human spirit of our blessed Saviour in his pre-existent or angelic state, inhabited by the great and almighty God, and composing as it were one complex person, one complex intelligent agent, in those appearances.

Objection. But does not this represent Christ as being the Father? Doth not this suppose God the Father to be incarnate, which is contrary to the common expressions of Scripture, and sense of the primitive church?

Answer I. Almost all the protestant writers, that have been counted most orthodox for some hundreds of years past, both in foreign countries and at home, have universally supposed the very same numerical godhead of the Father to be the godhead of the Son, and that it is the same infinite Spirit, the same understanding, and the same will, which exists in the Father with one relative property, that is also incarnate in the Son with another relative property: Only they suppose the superadded idea or relative property of fatherhood is not incarnate, but the superadded relative property of sonship. Now I cannot reasonably fear any just censures from those who follow this doctrine of all our reformed predecessors, because their opinion comes so very near to, or rather is the same with, what I have asserted, though they add some human phrases to it, of which I have not yet been able to attain any ideas.

Answer II. Though the same numerical godhead belong to the Father and to the Son, yet it is not proper to say, the "Father is incarnate," because the idea of fatherhood, superadded to the godhead, includes the idea of the prime agent and supreme ruler in the divine economy; whereas the idea of incarnation belongs properly to one that is sent in order to become a Mediator between God and man, and this belongs properly to the Son, as I shall shew immediately.

Answer III. Though in general we may suppose the very godhead of the Father to be united to the man Christ Jesus, according to these expressions in the tenth and fourteenth of John, and elsewhere, yet some have supposed there are other Scriptures which represent Christ in his divine nature, as the word or wisdom of the Father, as a peculiar essential principle of self-manifestation in the divine nature: And if Scripture does represent the great God under the peculiar idea or character of his wisdom or word, as manifesting itself in flesh, it is not so proper to say, "God the Father was incarnate," but that "the word or wisdom of God was made flesh," though the godhead of the Word is the same with that of the Father; for the wisdom of God is God. But I insist not on this answer, and therefore proceed.

Answer IV. The pre-existent soul of Christ, in whom the divine nature or godhead always dwelt, is properly the Son of God, derived from the Father before all worlds, as

his *only-begotten Son*, "the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person," *Heb.* i. 3. And this glorious human soul, who lived many ages in an angelic state, and was the angel of God's presence, does seem to be the more immediate subject of incarnation. This Son of God properly took flesh upon him, and, shall I say, became as it were a medium, in and by which the divine nature of godhead was united to flesh and blood. Thus Christ is properly called *God manifest in the flesh*, because true godhead always dwelt in this human soul, who is now incarnate: And he is properly called *the Son of God manifest in the flesh*, or *Christ come in the flesh*, because this human soul, who was properly the Son of God, was more immediately the subject of union to flesh and blood. And thus the expressions of St. Paul and St. John are reconciled; 1 Tim. iii. 16, *God was manifest in the flesh;* and 1 John iii. 8, *The Son of God was manifested;* and 1 John iv. 2, *Jesus Christ is come in the flesh.*

This sort of exposition of these texts, wherein Jesus Christ and God the Father are represented as one, or as mutually inbeing and indwelling in each other, seems more exactly agreeable to the whole tenor of Scripture, and best maintains the unity of the godhead, which is the foundation of all religion, both natural and revealed; nor is it liable to those cavils, objections, and inconveniencies, with which other expositions are attended.

This exposition is free from those obscurities which attend the mutual inbeing and indwelling of the Father and the Son, considered purely in their divine natures, which the learned have called ἐμπεριχώρησις and *circum-incession.* We can hardly suppose our Saviour intended that notion in *John* xiv. 7, &c. because it is a notion so mysterious and sublime, beyond all the ideas that Philip and Thomas could frame at that season: And therefore we cannot imagine that Christ would go to amuse them with these unsearchables, when they desired some instruction from him in the knowledge of God the Father.

This account of things plainly, intelligibly, and effectually, secures true, proper, and eternal deity to God the Father, and to our blessed Saviour, and that in two distinct persons, without introducing any other godhead besides the godhead of the Father. Thus God the Father is *the only true God* originally, and yet Jesus, the Son of God, by union to, and communion in the godhead of the Father, is also *the true God and eternal life*, 1 John v. 20. *And this is life eternal, to know the* Father, the *only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom he hath sent*, John xvii. 3.

QUESTION VI.

IS CHRIST THE EXPRESS IMAGE OF GOD THE FATHER, IN THE HUMAN NATURE, OR IN THE DIVINE?

ANSWER.

IN THE HUMAN NATURE.

In several places of Scripture our Saviour is represented as the image of God: 2 Cor. iv. 4, *Christ, who is the image of God.* Col. i. 15, *The image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature.* Heb. i. 2, 3, *The brightness of his* Father's *glory, and the express image of his person—whom he hath appointed heir of all things.* Now it is

an important inquiry what is the Scripture sense in which Jesus Christ is the image of God the Father?

It has been the custom of many theological writers, to suppose Christ in his pure divine nature to be this image of the Father to which the Scripture refers: But there are some reasons which seem to oppose this opinion, and incline me to withhold my assent from it at present.

1. That our protestant divines have almost universally supposed the godhead or divine nature of Christ to be the self-same, entire, numerical godhead, nature, or essence, which the Father has, and differing only in his personality, or manner of subsistence, that is, filiation; whereas the Father's manner of subsistence is paternity. Now, according to this doctrine, the divine nature of Christ can neither be the image of the Father in his essence, nor in his personality and subsistence.

The divine nature of Christ cannot be the image of the Father's essence, because it is numerically the very same essence, and nothing is said to be the image of itself.

Neither can the peculiar subsistence or personality of Christ as God, be the image of the Father's personality or subsistence; for sonship or filiation is by no means an image of paternity or fatherhood, but is rather the very reverse, or contrary to it. A derived manner of subsistence can never be the express image of an underived manner of subsistence.

If therefore the person of Christ, considered as God, be the same numerical godhead with the Father, together with a distinct personality, that is, filiation, and if he is neither the image of the Father's godhead nor his personality; then Christ, considered merely in his divine nature, cannot be the express image of the Father.

2. Another reason why Christ, as God, is not the image of God the Father, is because he is called the *image of the invisible God.* Now the godhead of Christ is as much invisible as the Father's godhead is; and therefore when he is called the *image of the invisible God,* it must signify, he is that image whereby God becomes visible, or is made known to men; and for this reason this title of Christ must include such a nature in Christ whereby the invisible God is made known to mankind; that is, it must include something of his inferior or human nature, and perhaps has a prime reference thereto.

3. When Christ is called *the image of God* in some Scriptures, it would naturally lead us to conceive him distinct from, and in some sense inferior to that God whose image he is; and therefore it doth as naturally lead one to conceive Christ's godhead is not denoted in those Scriptures; for the godhead of Christ and the Father is one, whereas the image is something inferior to the original.

Let it be noted also, that every man is called *the image of God,* 1 Cor. xi. 7; and therefore this seems to be too low a character of Christ, considered in his pure godhead.

But there are three senses in which Christ is the most noble image of God.

1. This title most admirably agrees to Christ considered as man: His human soul is the first, the greatest, the wisest, the holiest, and the best of all created spirits: The *man Jesus* is the wisest, holiest, and best of men, formed after the image of God in the greatest perfection; and probably his human soul in his pre-existent state was *the first-born of every creature,* and *the beginning* or chief *of the crea-*

tion of God, and who hath more of resemblance to God, in all natural and in all moral perfections, than any man ever had, or than the whole creation besides.

2. And if it be further considered that this glorious *man, Jesus Christ*, even in his pre-existent, as well as in his incarnate state, is intimately united to his divine nature, that is, to the same godhead that belongs to the Father, or to the eternal Word or wisdom of God; then the very perfections of God himself shine through the human nature of Christ, in a most resplendent manner: Christ, as God-man, is indeed "the brightness of his Father's glory, and the most express image of his person:" And in this sense it may be granted that Christ is such an image of God as to be also God himself, *God manifest in the flesh*, 1 Tim. iii. 16. *God over all, blessed for ever*, Rom. ix. 5.

Thus far we have seen in what sense Christ may be called *the image of God* the Father, in the very constitution of his person: Let us also now consider him,

3. In his character of Mediator; and so he becomes the image of the invisible God in yet a farther sense. He is the Father's ambassador to us, and in that sense he is the image of God, since he represents God among men. He is also *King of kings, and Lord of lords*, vested with a sovereign dominion over all things by the appointment of the Father; and therefore he may be called "the express image of his Father's person," as he is "appointed heir and Lord of all things:" And as Adam was the image of God, in his dominion over creatures in this world, so Christ is a much more glorious image of God the Father in his dominion over the upper and lower worlds.

Thus, though our blessed Saviour, considered in his pure godhead or divine nature, cannot be so properly called "the image of the invisible God," or "the express image of the Father;" yet considered, 1, as man, 2, as God-man, or 3, as Mediator, those ascriptions may very properly belong to him.

Note, In another treatise, which will be published in a few months, concerning *The Glory of Christ as God-man*,* and the pre-existence of his human soul, there will be an abridgement of a larger discourse of the Rev. Doctor Goodwin's, concerning *The Glories and Royalties of Jesus Christ, considered as God-man, and of his being the express Image of the Father.*

QUESTION VII.

ARE THE WORSHIP OF GOD AND HIS SON JESUS CHRIST CONSISTENT WITH ONE ANOTHER?

1. GOD *is a Spirit*, that is, a being who has understanding and will, infinite in knowledge, and in power, and in every perfection.

2. There is but *one only living and true God*, that is, one infinite Spirit. And I express myself thus, lest, if we suppose more infinite spirits than one, we should give occasion to say, we believe more gods than one. Three infinite spirits seem to me to be three gods.

3. This one true God is the only proper object of divine or religious worship.

* This was published 1746.

This doctrine was asserted by Moses, supported by the prophets, and confirmed by the Lord Jesus Christ himself.

4. In Scripture, Christ expressly calls God the Father *the only true God*, as distinct from himself, *John* xvii. 3: And the apostle Paul confirms it: *To us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things*, 1 Cor. viii. 6.

5. Jesus Christ, who is the Son of God, is evidently represented in Scripture as another distinct Spirit, different from God the Father, both before and after his incarnation.

Before his incarnation, he had a distinct consciousness or understanding, whereby he knew and was conscious of his own appointment to various services and his own mission by the Father; he knew all the offices he himself was to sustain, the flesh and blood he was to take upon him, and the work that he was sent to do by the Father's appointment. These personal consciousnesses of Christ are all different from the personal or individual consciousnesses of God the Father. Christ had also a distinct will, different from the Father, whereby he consented to what the Father's will ordained concerning him; he accepted of the mediatorial office at the Father's hand, and by his own will submitted to that incarnation which the will of the Father appointed for him: All this before he was actually incarnate. *Lo, I come to do thy will, O God,—a body hast thou prepared me;* Psalm xl. 6, 7. Heb. x. 5—7.

As for his appearance after his incarnation, it is sufficiently evident, he is another distinct spirit, different from the true and eternal God the Father; for he was conscious of his wearing flesh and blood, and of all the sensations of hunger, thirst, and pain, which he derived thence: He was then complete man, in body and soul, who knew, and worshipped, and obeyed his Father and his God. His own words confirm this: *I came not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me*, John vi. 38. *Father, not my will, but thine be done*, Luke xxii. 42.

6. Yet this Son of God often appears in Scripture as the object of divine or religious worship. It is thus in some places of the Old Testament, when he appeared as "the angel of God's presence;" for Abraham, Moses, and Joshua, worshipped him as *the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*, and as *Jehovah*, and as *the captain of the host of the Lord;* and in *Psalm* xlv. 11, we are required to worship him: *He is thy Lord, and worship thou him.*

And that we have several examples of worship paid to our Lord Jesus Christ, in the New Testament, especially after his resurrection and his ascension, is evident from the writings of the evangelists and the apostles. St. Stephen worshipped him, *Lord Jesus, receive my Spirit*, Acts vii. 59; and St. Paul, 2 Cor. xii. 8, *For this I besought the Lord thrice.* And all the saints and angels in heaven do worship him, *Rev.* v. 12, 13.

7. Thence it must follow, that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, though he be a distinct Spirit, yet he must be some way one with the true and eternal God, that he may be a proper object of religious or divine worship. Thus he expresses himself, John x. 30, *I and my Father are one.* He must be some way the same God, or the same infinite Spirit with the Father, while he is also another distinct inferior spirit, different from the Father.

8. Scripture does not teach us to conceive how this can be, but by so near an union between this supreme or infinite Spirit and the inferior or finite spirit, as may constitute one compounded person, one complex agent or principle of action, one complex object of honour, that is, God and man. And thus the Son of God seems to be represented often in Scripture as a complex person, or as two distinct spirits or beings in a personal union.

In the Old Testament he is the *man*, who conversed with Abraham, and who wrestled with Jacob; he is the *angel of the covenant*, the *angel* "in whom the name of God is," the "angel of the presence of God," or "a messenger sent from God," and yet he is also the *Jehovah*, the *God of Abraham and Isaac*, the *I am that I am*. He is spoken of as the *child born*, the *son given;* and yet the *mighty God*, and the *Holy One*, whom the angels adore.

He is represented also in the New Testament as "the man that died, rose, and ascended to heaven;" and also as the *Jehovah* or *God of Israel*, who is described in the sixty-eighth *Psalm*, compared with *Ephes.* iv. 8, as "ascending on high, leading captivity captive, and receiving gifts for men." He is *God manifest in the flesh*, 1 Tim. iii. 16; or a man *in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the godhead bodily*, Col. ii. 9. He is *the Word* who *was with God*, who *was God*, and who *was made flesh*, and tabernacled among men, *John* i. 1, 14.

Now this near, intimate, and unspeakable union between the man Jesus and one eternal God lays a sufficient foundation for divine names, titles, attributes, worship, and honours, to be ascribed to Jesus Christ the Son of God. "He and the Father are one," *John* x. 30; that is, so united, that one godhead is in both by this union. "He is in the Father, and the Father in him:" It is "the Father in him that doth his wondrous works;" *John* xiv. 10. "He was in the beginning with the Father:" *The Word was with God, and the Word was God*, John i. 1.

9. With regard to the blessed Spirit of God, though I think true godhead is ascribed to him, and personal actions are sometimes attributed to him in Scripture, yet as we are not expressly, plainly, and particularly informed, whether he be a really distinct principle or power in God, or has a proper distinct personality of himself, so neither are we expressly required to worship him, in any text of the Bible that I can find. Nevertheless, as divine attributes and actions, and sometimes personal characters, are ascribed to the Spirit of God in the language of Scripture, I think the reason of things sufficiently authorises and allows religious or divine worship to be paid to him, though we may not precisely know the manner how he is God, or how far he is a distinct person.

10. What particular distinctions may be in the godhead or divine nature itself, and how great these distinctions may be, Scripture does not so evidently assert, nor so clearly explain them to us. And in this place I would not on the one hand go beyond Scripture, nor on the other hand would I talk without ideas. But so far as I have represented this matter of divine worship, I think there are ideas, and those borrowed from Scripture too, which go along with my words all the way; and I must acknowledge this is the clearest conception I can arrive at in representing this subject, after many years study of the Scripture, and much prayer for divine instruction.

11. If we could once persuade ourselves to try to read every Scripture that relates

to the doctrine of the Trinity as placed in this light, without any prejudicate opinions derived from other human schemes, I think that doctrine would be found much more easy and intelligible than it is generally made; and the worship of the only true God would stand ascertained and confirmed: And yet Jesus Christ the Son of God being one with the Father, or being God and man in one complex person, might become the object of religious worship, according to the representations of Scripture, and without any offence to human reason.

12. If this be the true state of things, then the one eternal God abides still the only object of worship; whether he be considered as absolute in himself under the character of the *Father of all*, or as united to the *man Jesus Christ*, and dwelling in him by a personal union. Thus the Father and the Son are both worshipped, but when the Son is worshipped, it is as "one with the Father," and "to the glory of the Father;" *Phil.* ii. 11.

And, among other reasons, this is one, why it has "pleased the Father that all the fulness of the godhead should dwell in him bodily," *Col.* i. 19. ii. 9; that being so nearly united to God, or one with him, he might be a proper object of divine worship together with the Father: Rev. v. 13, *Blessing and honour, and glory and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever.*

QUESTION VIII.

WHAT IS THE WORSHIP PAID TO OUR BLESSED SAVIOUR, WHO IS THE IMAGE OF GOD?

Proposition I. THERE is something in the reason and nature of man, that directs and inclines him to own and worship some god, or some superior being, from whom himself and all his enjoyments are derived, and on whom his expectations depend.

Proposition II. Reason and revelation conspire to teach us, that there is but one true God.

Proposition III. This one true God has required expressly in his word, that he alone should be the object of our worship or religious homage: And it is several times repeated with much solemnity in the Old Testament and in the New.

Proposition IV. There is something in the nature of man, that inclines him to reverence and respect the image of that being which he worships: And the reason is evident; because the image is supposed to be something more within the reach of his senses, and therefore more suited to his bodily nature, than God who is the spiritual and unseen object of his worship; or at least, because he can have the image sensibly present with him when he has not the original; and the image being supposed to have the likeness or resemblance of the original object of worship, it refreshes the memory, and brings to mind the excellencies of the divine original.

If we love or honour a friend, a father, or a king, we desire to have their pictures or images near us; we pay a sort of esteem, love, and veneration to those pictures, upon the account of their likeness to the original persons; and we also

pay our esteem, love, and veneration, to the absent original by the means or medium of these pictures.

It is from this principle that the heathens, in all nations, who have worshipped the sun, moon, and stars, or their kings, heroes, and ancestors, have generally made pictures and images of them, and either reverenced and worshipped the images, or worshipped the originals in and by those images, or both. And for this reason, in the corrupt antichristian state, they did not only "worship the beast with seven heads and ten horns, but they made an image thereof, and worshipped it," *Rev.* xiii. 14, 15.

Proposition V. God has expressly forbidden men to make any image of himself, and worship it, or even to make it a medium of paying their religious homage and worship to himself. The second command is most express in this matter; and this is in general esteemed by all protestant writers to be the plain sense of that commandment: And one chief reason of the command is because mankind is so prone by nature to worship images which they have made themselves.

Proposition VI. God himself has never shewn or given us any express image of himself but one, and that is his own well-beloved Son, Jesus Christ: *Heb.* i. 2, he is *the brightness of his* Father's *glory, and the express image of his person.* He is *the image of God,* 2 Cor. iv. 4. And in *Col.* i. 15, he is *the image of the invisible God.* Now this expression seems to have a prime reference to his human nature; or, as the learned and pious Doctor Goodwin asserts and proves, it must at least include his human nature in it, because every thing that relates directly to the divine nature of Christ is as invisible as God the Father, and therefore his divine nature, considered alone, would never have been so particularly described as the image of the invisible God.

Proposition VII. The great God himself has required us to make this his image the medium of our worship paid to him. Ephes. ii. 18, *Through him we have access unto the Father.* Col. iii. 17, *Give thanks to God,* even *the Father, by him.* And he also requires men and angels to worship this his image: John v. 23, *That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father.* Heb. i. 6, *Let all the angels of God worship him.* Thus far has the blessed God indulged or encouraged that natural inclination in man to reverence the image of that divine being which he worships.

Proposition VIII. To this end it has pleased the great God, in a special manner, to assume into the nearest union with himself this his own Son, and thereby to render him a more complete image of himself: Thus the Son, who is "the express image of the Father," and "the brightness or splendor of his glory," *Heb.* i. 3, is also "one with the Father," as Christ expresses it, John xiv. 19, *He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father;* and the reason he gives is this, verse 10, *I am in the Father, and the Father in me:* John x. 30, *I and my Father are one;* that is, by this union, as it is explained *verse* 38. And this is done not only to render him capable of his glorious offices, but of divine honours too; that Jesus Christ might be worshipped, and yet that, according to God's original command, that which is not God might not be made the object of our worship.

Since there cannot be more gods than one, and since proper deity could not be communicated to the *man Jesus,* who is *the image of the invisible God,* to

render him a partaker of our worship any other way, therefore proper deity is united to him, that he might be *one with God*. And thus, as the Word, who was God, was made flesh, *John* i. 1, 14, by his personal union to flesh, so the man Jesus may be said to become God, or to be God, by his personal union to God.

Thus the human nature of Christ, being a creature most like to God, and being inhabited also by godhead, is the brightest image of the invisible God, and is one with God himself, and that, as our divines express it, by a personal union: And thus he is taken into as much participation of that worship which men pay to God, as a creature is capable of receiving, and as the original law of worshipping none but God can admit. See Dissertation III. pages 402—414.

Proposition IX. When the ancient heathens worshipped the images of their gods, the best way they could ever take to vindicate it was under this notion, that they supposed their gods to inhabit their own images, and thus they worshipped the image together with their god dwelling in the image: But with far better authority, and with infinitely more justice and truth, may Christians worship the Son of God, who is the only appointed image of the only true God, subsisting in a personal union with the indwelling godhead.

Proposition X. This may be illustrated by a very lively similitude. A vast hollow globe of crystal, as large as the sun, is in itself a fair image or resemblance of the sun: But if we might suppose the sun itself included in this crystal globe, it would thereby become a much brighter and nobler image of the sun, and it would be in a sense one with the sun itself, or one complex being. And thus the same honourable ascriptions which are given to the sun because of his light and heat, might be given also to this crystal globe, considered as inhabited by the sun itself, which could not be done without this inhabitation.

Then whatsoever honours were paid to this globe of crystal, would redound to the honour of the sun, even as the divine honour and adoration paid to our blessed Saviour arises from the personal union of the human nature with the divine, and finally redounds to the glory of God. *Phil.* ii. 11.

Let it be observed here, that though I borrow an emblem or a resemblance of this divine doctrine, from the world of nature, or from the heathen nations, yet the doctrine itself is entirely derived from Scripture, and might easily be confirmed by many more citations out of the sacred writers.

AN

ESSAY

ON THE

TRUE IMPORTANCE OF ANY HUMAN SCHEMES

TO EXPLAIN THE SACRED

DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY:

SHEWING,

I. THAT NO SUCH SCHEME OF EXPLICATION IS NECESSARY TO SALVATION.

II. THAT IT MAY YET BE OF GREAT USE TO THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

III. BUT ALL SUCH EXPLICATIONS OUGHT TO BE PROPOSED WITH MODESTY TO THE WORLD, AND NEVER IMPOSED ON THE CONSCIENCE.

AN ESSAY

ON

THE TRUE IMPORTANCE OF ANY HUMAN SCHEMES

TO EXPLAIN THE

SACRED DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY.

SECTION I.

THE first of these points is already argued in a *Discourse on the Christian Doctrine of the Trinity*, Proposition XV. (See pages 330—333). And we only take leave here to mention those heads of argument, and to enlarge a little on the same subject.

1. "Any particular explication of the scriptural doctrine of the Trinity can never be necessary to salvation, because, though the doctrine itself of three personal characters which have communion in one godhead, be clearly revealed, yet the *modus* how they are one, and how they are three, is not clearly and plainly revealed." And indeed, if this *modus* be revealed at all in Scripture, yet it is in so obscure a manner, that we can come at it only by laborious reasonings and a train of difficult consequences; whereas all necessary articles are and must be clear and plain: And if they are not contained in express words, yet they must lie open and obvious to a natural and easy inference.

2. Any particular explication of this mystery is not necessary to salvation, because "the most pious as well as the wisest and most learned Christians have had very different sentiments on this subject, and gone into different schemes of explication;" and that in the several ages of Christianity, as well as in our present age. The very mention of the venerable names and opinions of Dr. Cudworth, Bishop Bull, Bishop Stillingfleet, Bishop Fowler, Bishop Pearson, Dr. Wallis, Dr. Owen, and Mr. Howe, is sufficient to confirm this second reason.

3. "We may pay all due honours to the sacred Three, which are required in Scripture, while we believe them to be represented as three personal agents, and as one in godhead, without any particular explication how they are one, and how they are three."

Now it is evident that Scripture hath more directly and expressly laid our salvation upon the special divine characters or offices which the Father, Son, and Spirit, sustain in the Bible, and upon the peculiar blessings which we derive from them, and the peculiar honours to be paid to them, rather than upon any nice explication of their intimate essence and union, their nature and difference; and therefore such a nice explication is not of necessity to salvation.

It is evident to me, that divine and religious ascriptions and honours are paid to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, in Scripture, and I think they are due to them all. Now

how these divine honours can be paid by any who deny them to have some true and proper communion in the eternal godhead, I cannot well understand. But I can easily conceive that divine honour may be given them, without knowing exactly the precise points and boundaries of their union and distinction. See more in *The Christian Doctrine of the Trinity*, Proposition XXI. pages 354—357.

Do we not find it sufficient, in all the common affairs of life, to manage a thousand concerns wisely with regard to the human soul and body, and with regard to each particular being of the animal, the vegetable, and the intellectual world, if we do but just know whether it be an animal, a vegetable, or an intellectual being, without any determinate philosophical notions and ideas of the essences and specific differences of all or any of these, and without determining how far they agree, and how far they differ? And why may it not be so in the affairs of religion? He may be a very wise man, and dispose and direct his affairs admirably well with regard to his king, his bishop, his father, and his friend, by that common and general knowledge which he hath of their capacities and powers, their several offices, and the relations they stand in to him, without any precise acquaintance with their particular natural constitutions, or the relations they stand in to one another. He may be a most discreet manager of his affairs, and speak and do all things in proper time and place, without knowing philosophically what place is, or what is time: And he can be contented with this ignorance, and be a wise man still. And why may he not be a Christian with the same degrees of knowledge of the things of Christianity, that is, without philosophical science of the abstract nature of God and Christ.

A poor labourer or shepherd believes Jesus Christ to have the proper divine powers of knowing, managing, and governing all things; therefore he prays to him, and trusts in him as his Lord and his God, without any notion either of self-existence and independency, or without the least thought of consubstantial generation, eternal sonship, and necessary emanation from the Father; all which ideas some writers include in the divine nature of Christ, though perhaps without any sufficient authority from Scripture. He believes him to be the true God, and Son of God, and the appointed Mediator to bring him to God; therefore he honours and adores him, and depends on him under that character, without any notion whether his sonship belong to his human or divine nature. He believes him also to be the Son of man, but perhaps he may not ever have heard whether he had an earthly father or no, or that he was the son of a pure virgin. Now what is there in all this ignorance that forbids him to be a true Christian and a sound believer?

But I would pursue this argument a little, under some more parallel instances.

The learned world well knows what corporeal notions the famous ancient father Tertullian had of the soul of man; what immaterial and refined opinions Des Cartes and his followers have entertained concerning the presence or place of spirits; and what were the contrary sentiments of Dr. Henry More and his admirers.

Now may not a Tertullianist take proper care for the salvation of his soul, though he thinks the nature of it be corporeal? May not the soul of a Cartesian find the right way to heaven, though he believes his soul has no relation to place, and exists no where, or in no certain place? May he not *worship God* with acceptance *in spirit and in truth*, though he conceive God himself, as an infinitely wise and powerful mind, void of all extension, and who hath no relation to place? And though he suppose his omnipresence

to be nothing else but his universal knowledge, and power, and agency, through all times and places? And may not a Morist, with the same acceptance, worship the same God, though he believes him to be infinitely extended, and penetrating all bodies and all possible spaces?

What is there in these philosophical particularities, that forbids a man to be truly pious, while he believes his soul to have an immortal being after this life, and while he supposes God to have all the requisite properties and powers for a Creator, and governor, and judge of the world.

You will say, some of these persons hold gross inconsistencies, and believe impossibles, while they suppose "a corporeal soul to be immortal; or a God infinitely extended through length, breadth, and depth, who is a pure Spirit;" and therefore such a soul cannot be immortal, and such a God cannot know, or govern, or judge.

I answer, It may possibly be so: These may be great inconsistencies; and yet a man may sincerely believe them both, who does not see the inconsistency of them. And if we must be condemned to hell for believing inconsistencies, then woe be to every son and daughter of Adam! What man is there in the world free from all error? And yet every error which he holds, is perhaps inconsistent with some truth which he believes: It is hard to write anathama upon a man's forehead, because of some inconsistency in his opinions, while he believes all necessary truths, and practises all the necessary duties relating to God and Christ, and his own soul.

You may perhaps object and say, that he that believes the soul to be corporeal, by consequence does not believe it to be immortal; or he that believes God to be infinitely extended in length and breadth, by consequence does not believe God to be a spiritual being, who can know and judge human affairs: And thus in the same manner, by the consequence of his own suppositions, the man that holds these doctrines may perhaps be proved to be a brute and an atheist.

I reply, And must all the consequences that can be drawn from the mistakes of any man be imputed to that man as his own opinions? This would make dreadful work in the christian church. The arminian would reduce the calvinist into blasphemy and atheism; and likewise the calvinist the arminian. By this uncharitable method each of them would be called atheists and blasphemers, and be utterly excluded from christian communion by such a perverse practice as this.

I would add yet further, that by such uncharitable constructions as these, the Cartesian Christian might say, I cannot join in worship with Dr. More, and his followers, for we have not the same object of worship: I worship a God who is a pure Spirit, a pure thinking being, without extension or dimension; but they worship a being infinitely extended, that is, infinitely long, broad, and deep. The Morist might cry with the same zeal, I cannot worship with a Cartesian, for we worship not the same object: He adores a God that is properly in no place; but I worship that God who penetrates all things and places, and is expanded through all.

Now if such objections as these are indulged and supported, no two persons could join together in any part of divine worship who had such different ideas of the divine essence or attributes, lest they should imagine they worship two distinct or different deities. And if this were admitted, where could we find two persons who had so exactly the same ideas of God as to hold communion in one worship?

This wretched practice of imputing all the distant consequences of any man's opinions

or mistakes to him, is quite contrary to our Saviour's general rule, Matt. vii. 12, *Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.* Let these objectors be pleased to consider that doubtless they themselves in some parts of their religion are guilty of some errors or mistakes in their opinions; for no man's knowledge is perfect: And if those errors should be pushed home to their utmost consequences, perhaps they might terminate in blasphemy, atheism, or mere nonsense: But no man would be willing to be treated in this manner himself, *viz.* to have all the utmost consequences of his mistaken opinions be imputed to him, therefore he ought not to treat his brothers so; according to that universal rule, "What ye would that men should do unto you, that do ye also to them," *Matt.* vii. 12.

Now to apply these things to the present case:

Suppose, for instance, *Timon* and *Pithus* both believe Christ to be the true God; but *Timon* supposes him not to be self-existent, because he saith, he is a Son, derived from the Father by an eternal generation. On the other hand, *Pithus* believes him to be self-existent, because he is God. Now has *Pithus* reason to say, that because *Timon* doth not believe the self-existence of Christ, therefore by consequence he does not believe his divinity? Or, should *Timon* be permitted to conclude, that because *Pithus* believes the self-existence of Christ, therefore by consequence he does not believe his sonship? Would it be agreeable either to the reason of a man, or to the charity of a Christian, that these two men should anathematise one another, or seclude each other from christian communion, because of the consequences of their opinions, while they both profess to maintain that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and has such communion in and with the eternal godhead, as that both of them profess him to be true God, and both pay him divine worship?

Now what I would infer from hence is this, that since the different explications of the doctrine of the Trinity may be so abused to give such occasions for contest, where Christians are not wise and charitable, I would rather exclude all the particular modes of explication from the terms of christian communion, than I would exclude one Christian from the church of Christ. Where a man professes that there is but one God, and yet that Father, Son, and Spirit, have such a distinction from each other, and such a communion in and with this one godhead, as renders them all-sufficient for the characters and offices which they sustain in the gospel, and pays proper honours to them accordingly, I would never constrain him to determine any further upon those difficult points of the union and distinction of the sacred Three; of the self-existence, the eternal generation, or eternal procession, of the Son and Holy Spirit. Nor whether they are three natures united in one godhead, or whether one individual nature only.

To sum up the whole, it is evident to me, that the holy Scripture itself, as I have already proved elsewhere, lays the stress of our salvation upon a belief that Christ is the Messiah, the appointed all-sufficient Saviour, a trust in the proper atonement or sacrifice of Christ for the forgiveness of sins, a dependence on his grace and Spirit for light and holiness, and a submission to his government, much more than it does upon any precise and exact notions or hypotheses concerning his divine and his human nature; even though the union of the divine and the human nature in him are in my judgment necessary to render his salvation complete.

Scripture teaches us to concern ourselves about regeneration and grace to be received from the blessed Spirit, more than about the nature or essence of that Spirit which

regenerates us. It makes our eternal interest depend upon the glorious characters, offices, and operations, of the three persons of the blessed Trinity, and our respective honours paid to them, rather than upon our philosophical and exact acquaintance with their inmost essence or essences, and their personal distinctions. I must believe that the great God will make merciful allowances to sincere souls for their different sentiments, or for their ignorance and darkness in so sublime and mysterious an article, which almost all parties allow to contain some unknowables and inconceivables in it.

SECTION II.

"Yet where God is pleased to give greater degrees of light and knowledge, if we can further explain these mysteries of Christianity in clear ideas and proper language, it is a piece of excellent service done to the gospel of Christ."

A clear and happy explication in what manner the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, are to be conceived as three personal agents, and as having communion in one godhead, would carry in it many desirable advantages.

1. This would be like a ray of sacred light let into some of the most dark and difficult passages of the word of God. This would help us to unfold many Scriptures, which at present lie sealed in obscurity; or at least it would afford us the true sense of several texts, which by reason of the various expositions of them, have hitherto given but an uncertain sound and doubtful notices of divine truth. It would clear up a large part of the word of God to our understandings, and teach us to read the sacred transactions of the Father, Son, and Spirit, in the Bible, with more abundant edification.

2. This might teach us to perform our various duties of adoration, faith, love, and obedience, to the sacred Three, so far as Scripture requires it, in a more distinct and rational manner than we have hitherto done. The humble Christian would view and adore his heavenly Father, his Saviour, and his Sanctifier, with much more inward pleasure, when he should be enabled to do it with much clearer and more explicit ideas of their divine unity and distinction.

3. Such a happy explication of the mystery of the blessed Trinity, would vindicate this doctrine against the cavils of the unbeliever, as well as against the scoffery and insults of the profane world. This would make it appear how the Son and the Spirit might be true God, without injury to the divine honour of God the Father.

There have been some antitrinitarian writers who have denied the possibility of the godhead of the Son and Spirit in any sense or *modus* at all; and have pretended to prove that every model and manner of explication of this doctrine hath some absurdity and inconsistency belonging to it. Now it would be certainly of considerable service to the truth to exhibit some scheme, some manner of explication to the world, wherein it is fairly consistent with the reason of things and the language of Scripture, that the Son and Spirit may have communion in true godhead as well as the Father: And that though there be but one God, yet the divine names and attributes may be ascribed to the sacred Three, as having communion in this one godhead.

4. This would be a glorious means of vindicating the protestant religion against the charges which are brought by the papists, who tell us, that we refuse their doctrine of transubstantiation, because it seems inconsistent to sense and reason, and yet we believe the doctrine of the Trinity, which is charged with the same inconsistency. We often

find fault with them for making the words *mystery* and *supernatural* an asylum and refuge whereby to screen themselves from the charge of a most absurd opinion, that is, "of bread becoming flesh, and yet retaining the properties of bread at the same time." They in the like manner find fault with us for making the same words *mystery* and *supernatural* a refuge for ourselves, while we profess three distinct persons in one God.

I confess there are many things to be said, and that with great justice, to vindicate the conduct of protestant writers in the doctrine of the Trinity, which can never serve to defend the popish doctrine of transubstantiation: For one is a theme or subject that concerns the deep things of the divine nature; the other relates but to flesh and bread, which are objects that fall entirely within the compass of our senses and our reasoning powers; and we can much better judge and determine what is and what is not a real inconsistency in the one than in the other.

Yet after all, it would be a vast advantage in the defence of our religion against the assaults of the papists, and it would vindicate Christianity most gloriously in the eyes of Jews, heathens, and all infidels, if we could find some plain, easy, natural, and obvious account of this matter, how the sacred Three, which are represented in Scripture under distinct personal characters, have a communion in one godhead.

5. I add farther, that if it were possible to exhibit a scheme of explication which should be so plain, so easy, so agreeable to the light of nature, and yet so happily correspondent with Scripture, as to captivate the assent of the learned and unlearned at the very proposal of it, what a glorious advantage would the church of Christ obtain by this means towards its unity and peace! What a blessed end would be put to those shameful quarrels and contentions on this subject, that have in every age, more or less, divided the christian world and laid it bleeding with many wounds?

There are some difficult parts of our holy religion which have been so far explained by the united labours and prayers of pious and learned men, that controversies about them are well nigh ceased, and the disputes brought to an end. The humble believer has been enlightened and taught to understand the articles which he professes: The profane caviller and the subtle critic have been baffled by the mere force of argument set in a clear and easy light: And why may we not hope for the same success in this sacred article of the Trinity, by humble and laborious inquiries into the word of God, with a dependence on the aids of the divine Spirit, who is promised to "guide us into all truth?" *John* xvi. 13.

It must be acknowledged, indeed, there has no publicly-received scheme been yet so successful to explain this doctrine, but what has several difficulties attending it, and has left too much room for the cavil of unbelievers. Nor have any of these schemes hitherto very much assisted the unlearned Christian in the practice of his devotions, or blessed him with much clearer and juster ideas of the matter than his own reading of the Bible had given him before.

And it must be confessed also, with sorrow and shame, that some writers have invented or enlarged special explications of the sacred doctrine with too great a neglect of Scripture in their studies. They have affected to be wise in words without ideas. They have set forth their own learned explications of the doctrine of the Trinity, in sounding scholastic phrases and hard words, with great assurance; and have helped men to talk roundly on this sublime subject with a great exuberance and fluency of such language as has been established into orthodoxy. This sacred doctrine

has been too often dressed up by authors in abundance of metaphysical phrases borrowed from the popish schools, but without any clearer conceptions of the truth than their primitive predecessors had attained, or than their meaner brethren possess without that learned language.

But though nothing has hitherto been done so effectually as one could wish, to remove all difficulty and confusion, yet he is a bold man that will venture to lay an everlasting bar upon our fervent prayers and humble study of the Scripture, and upon all the labours and hopes of the present and future christian ages, merely because the ages past have not been favoured with those happy hints whereby to unfold these sacred mysteries, and to reconcile the difficulties that attend them.

SECTION III.

"BUT after all, whatsoever light or knowledge we may suppose ourselves to have attained in the explication of this sublime doctrine, we ought not to be over solicitous to proselyte other Christians to our particular scheme; much less to impose it on the consciences of others: We should ever take care lest by anxious inquiries into things less necessary, we should unhappily divert ourselves or others from those duties and practical regards, which we all owe to the Father, Son, and Spirit, and which all parties agree to be necessary to salvation."

It is an important lesson, both of natural and revealed religion, that we should lay out our greatest concern and zeal on things of the greatest consequence: And we have already proved, that it is of much higher moment to wait for divine benefits from the sacred Three, and to pay our proper respective honours to the sacred Three, so far as Scripture requires it, than to know how far they are the same, and how far they are distinguished. Indeed when we have arrived at any farther light in some divine doctrine, we ourselves may find greater clearness of thought, with more ease, satisfaction, and pleasure in the practice of especial duties; yet the most enlightened persons ought not to give unnecessary and unreasonable disturbance to all those who practise the same duties, though they do not attain so clear ideas as God may have blessed and favoured them with.

If we labour in our zeal to proselyte the learned to our scheme, the most part of them are so deeply rooted in their old opinions, so immoveably established in their particular forms, so self-satisfied in what they believe, so much prejudiced against any further light, that we shall probably do nothing but awaken their learned anger, to fix the brand of heresy upon us, and to overwhelm the hints of any brighter discovery with clamours and hard names, and drown them in noise and darkness.

If we are too solicitous to persuade the unlearned Christian to come into any better explication of this doctrine, than he has learned in his younger years, we have the same huge prejudices to encounter here as in the learned world; nor can we hope for much better success, if we attempt to change his ancient opinion by a hasty and industrious zeal. Hard names and reproaches are weapons ever at hand, and common both to the wise and the unwise, the greek and the barbarian. The vulgar Christian is as expert at them as the scholar.

Besides, if he be a person of weaker understanding, whom we address with our new

explication, and we set ourselves hard at work to shake his old notions, but in the mere *modus* of things, we may happen to unhinge him, as it were, and throw him off from his centre; we may embarrass his mind with inward contests, which may be too hard for him; and we may tempt him to lay out too many of his thoughts and hours on some particular explications of this doctrine, on the substance of which he had long before built his pious practices and devotions, though mingled with some innocent mistakes.

Yet these accidental inconveniencies are not a sufficient reason for our supine and perpetual contentment with confused sentiments and unintelligible speeches about the *modus* of sacred truths, if clearer ideas are any way attainable. There are just and strong motives that may excite us to search into the deep things of God, and to propose all our improvements in knowledge, to the world and the church, though there are no reasons or motives sufficient to impel us to impose our improved notions on others, or to raise contentions and quarrels on the account of them.

All our particular illustrations, therefore, or clearer conceptions of this sublime doctrine, which God at any time may have favoured us with, should be proposed to the christian world with great modesty, with a humble sense of our fallible natures, with a gentle address to the wise and to the unwise, without imposing upon their judgments, or dictating to their faith, and with a zealous care to maintain all those necessary practical regards to the holy Trinity, which are of so much greater importance.

And if it be an unreasonable thing to dictate to our fellow Christians, and urge our particular sentiments on them in these mysterious points, how much more culpable and domineering is it to establish any especial form of human explication of this sacred doctrine as a test of orthodoxy and Christianity! How vain a presumption it is, with a pretence of divine authority, to impose mere human explications upon the consciences of men, and to forbid them all the sacred blessings of especial communion in the gospel, unless they testify their assent to such a particular hypothesis or scheme of explication, which the imposers confess to be human, and yet impose it in their own prescribed form of words.

The persons who are guilty of this uncharitable practice may consecrate their impositions and their excommunications with holy names, and call them pure zeal for the divinity of Christ; but I suspect it will be found in the great day to deserve no better a character than a mistaken zeal for the honour of Christ, mingled perhaps with zeal for the divinity of their own notions, which they had incorporated with the plain and express revelations of the godhead of Jesus Christ our Lord.

He that makes a private and particular explication of any doctrine which is dark and doubtful in itself, and not clearly revealed in Scripture, as necessary as the doctrine itself, which is plain and clearly revealed, puts the matters of faith and opinion on the same foot, and intrudes too much upon the authority and kingdom of our Lord Jesus in his church.

THE

GLORY OF CHRIST AS GOD-MAN

DISPLAYED,

IN THREE DISCOURSES,

VIZ.

DISCOURSE I. A SURVEY OF THE VISIBLE APPEARANCES OF CHRIST, AS GOD, BEFORE HIS INCARNATION, WITH SOME OBSERVATIONS ON THE TEXTS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT APPLIED TO CHRIST.

DISCOURSE II. AN INQUIRY INTO THE EXTENSIVE POWERS OF THE HUMAN NATURE OF CHRIST IN ITS PRESENT GLORIFIED STATE, WITH SEVERAL TESTIMONIES ANNEXED.

DISCOURSE III. AN ARGUMENT TRACING OUT THE EARLY EXISTENCE OF THE HUMAN SOUL OF CHRIST, EVEN BEFORE THE CREATION OF THE WORLD.

WITH AN

APPENDIX,

CONTAINING AN ABRIDGMENT OF DOCTOR THOMAS GOODWIN'S "DISCOURSE OF THE GLORIES AND ROYALTIES OF CHRIST," IN HIS WORKS IN FOLIO, VOL. II. BOOK III.

THE

PREFACE.

OUR Lord Jesus Christ is the author, the foundation, and the glory of our religion. The Scripture teaches us to describe this blessed person two ways, that is, as a man who is one with God, or as God who is one with man.

He is called sometimes *God with us*, Matt. i. 23; *God manifest in the flesh*, 1 Tim. iii. 16; that is, God dwelling in our mortal nature. At other times he is described as *the man Christ Jesus*, in whom *dwelleth all the fulness of the godhead bodily*, 1 Tim. ii. 5, and Col. ii. 9; a man *of the seed of David after the flesh*, Rom. i. 3, who is *God over all, blessed for evermore*, Rom. ix. 5; a man whose flesh Thomas the apostle saw and felt, and yet called him *My Lord and my God*, John xx. 27, 28. Upon such Scriptures as these my faith is built.

And as it is the most general sentiment of the christian world in our age, so I must acknowledge it is very evident to me, that our blessed Saviour is often represented in Scripture as a complex person, wherein God and man are united, so as to make up one complex agent, one intellectual compound being, God joined with man, so as to become one common principle of action and passion. Christ wrought miraculous works, and yet it is "the Father, or God, in him, who doth these works," *John* xiv. 10. The God and the man are one.

And on this account the *child Jesus* may be well called *the mighty God*, Isaiah ix. 6. And God himself is said to "redeem the church with *his own blood*," Acts xx. 28; and to "lay down his life for us," 1 *John* iii. 16: This intimate or present union between God and Christ allows him to say, John x. 38, *I am in the Father, and the Father in me;* and verse 30, *I and the Father are one.*

Since Christ Jesus, in his person and his offices, hath so large a share in our holy religion, we cannot be too well acquainted with his various glories. It is the study and joy of angels to pry into these wonders, 1 *Peter* i. 12. And it is the duty of men "to grow in the knowledge of Christ their Lord, their God, and their Saviour," 2 *Peter* iii. 18.

It is granted that many things relating to the ever blessed Trinity may have heights and depths in them which are unsearchable by our understandings. Though we learn from Scripture, that true and proper deity is ascribed to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and that they are represented often in Scripture as distinct personal agents: Yet after all our inquiries and prayers, we may be still much at a loss to describe exactly wherein this distinct personality consists, and what is the distinct communion of each

of them in the divine nature. We have never yet been able, with any strong evidence and clear certainty, precisely to adjust this sacred difficulty, how far they are one, and how far they are three. Several schemes and hypotheses have been invented for this purpose, and the best of them falls short of solving all questions relating to this doctrine completely to our satisfaction, though some of them are evidently much more agreeable to Scripture than others.

As it is our great happiness, that the knowledge of any such particular schemes of explication are not necessary to the salvation of men, so neither are any of those different schemes of the Trinity at all needful to our present inquiries concerning that glory of Christ, which is the subject of this treatise.

Let no humble Christian therefore be jealous of losing his own form of explaining the Trinity, by reading these discourses; nor let him be afraid of being led into any particular human schemes or explications of that divine doctrine. I have so far laid them all aside in this book, that there is scarce any hint of any of them, and that in a very slight and transient manner.

The glories of Christ, both in his divine and human nature, which are here unfolded, are not necessarily confined to any particular schemes or hypotheses of the Trinity. All that I pretend to maintain here is, that our blessed Saviour must be God, and he must be man; God and man in two distinct natures, and one person, that is one complex personal agent. Those who believe this doctrine may read these treatises without danger or fear; for I would always endeavour to search out divine truth, and promote the knowledge of Christ, as far as possible, without offence to the bulk of the christian world, or any of the truly pious and religious of every party.

These three Discourses were written at three distant and different times: I hope therefore my readers will be so candid as to bear with a small repetition of the same thoughts, or with references from one discourse to another, though not expressed in so regular a manner as though I had all three constantly in one view.

Though the order in which these Discourses stand be not adjusted according to chronology, yet it is such an order as I thought most proper to lead my reader by degrees into these discoveries of the glory of Christ.

In the First of these Discourses, I have maintained the "godhead of Christ in his appearences under the Old Testament." The doctrine itself is entirely agreeable to the common sentiments of all our divines, and I have confirmed it by such arguments as seem to me most effectual and convincing. I persuade myself, the generality of my readers will concur with me in these sentiments, though I will not say I have borrowed my method of argument and vindication from any but the sacred writers.

In the Second and Third Discourses perhaps they will find some things, which though they are derived from Scripture, yet appear to be more uncommon, and which have not been taken notice of by many authors. With regard to these, I beg leave to

make these few requests to those who will seriously, and with an honest heart peruse what I have here written.

1. That they would suffer themselves to believe with me that we have not yet attained all knowledge, nor particularly apprehended all those things that may be learned from the Bible concerning our Lord Jesus Christ: And that they would permit themselves also to think with me, that we are all fallible creatures, and that it is possible for us to have been mistaken in some points, at least of lesser moment, which we have been taught to believe before we were capable of searching the word of God for ourselves: For the best of men who have been our teachers know but in part, and therefore they could prophesy, or instruct others but in part; 1 *Cor.* xiii. 9. Though they have spoken the truth, yet perhaps they have not spoken all the truth which lies hid in the holy Scriptures.

2. That my readers would not be startled and discomposed at any thing which may seem new and strange to them at first appearance, nor be frighted at a sentence, as though heresy were in it, because it may differ a little from the sentiments which they have hitherto received. That very same notion in any science whatsoever, which may perhaps surprise us at first, by reading further onward may become plain, and easy, and certain: And I can assure them, that there is not one sentence in all these Discourses but what is very consistent with a firm belief of the divinity of Christ, and a just and sincere concern for the most eminent and glorious truths of the gospel, as they are professed by protestants among us, against the socinian and arian errors.

3. That they would not rashly conclude that any christian doctrine is lost, or any article of their faith endangered, or the proper deity of our Lord Jesus Christ dropped or neglected, if they should be led to interpret a few texts of Scripture in another manner than they themselves have been formerly used to explain them: For it must be acknowledged, that some pious and zealous writers for the truth have mustered together out of all the Bible whatsoever texts could possibly be turned by art or force to support any one doctrine which they undertook to defend, just as ancient heretics have done to support their errors. Now among this great number of Scriptures, it may be easily supposed, that there is here and there one which is not so fit and apposite to their purpose, and which does not carry in it naturally that sense which has been imposed upon it; or at least which does not contain that force of argument which has been generally believed; and yet the same point of doctrine may remain immoveable, without the help of that particular text.

Now though they have been learned, and wise, and pious men, that have used these Scriptures to support some particular doctrine of Scripture or article of faith, yet it is possible they may have been mistaken in the application of them. Latter days, and the maturer age of the world, have given light to many passages of the Bible, which were not well understood in the days of the fathers: And though I read their writings with sincere reverence, yet not with an absolute submission to their dictates. The same

doctrines and articles of faith which they espoused and defended in their time, may be still espoused and defended with as much zeal and success in our day, by some new arguments brought to support them, though in reason and justice we are constrained to drop some of the old ones. Besides,

There is more honour done to the cause of Christianity and the gospel, by building all the articles of it upon such Scriptures only as are firm and unshaken to support them, than by multiplying feeble shows and shadows of defence. We expose ourselves and our faith at once to the insult and ridicule of our adversaries, by persisting in a mistaken exposition of Scripture, and by maintaining every colour or false appearance of argument, even though it be in the defence of a most important truth. We ought to make use of all the advantages of encreasing light, nor continue in a wrong application of Scriptures to support any point of our faith in opposition to their most open and evident meaning. Though truth is infinitely preferable to error, yet men may use insufficient arguments for one as well as the other. And in our days, I conceive a wise and thoughtful man will not be charmed at once with a title-page, merely because it pretends to many hundred proofs of the godhead of Christ.

4. I request that they would consult their Bible with diligence, as I have done, especially in the places which I have cited, and like honest English readers would look only at the sense as it lies before them, and neither consider nor care whether it be new or old, so it be true: For he that doth this, is much more likely to be led into the truth than a greater scholar, full of his own notions, which he has learned in the schools, who brings his own opinions always to direct and determine his own interpretations of Scripture whensoever he reads it; and thus he interprets every text, not so much according to the plain, obvious, and easy sense of it, and in correspondence with the context, as he does in correspondence with his own opinions and his learned schemes.

5. That they would suffer themselves to yield to truth wheresoever they find it, and imagine that the loss of an old opinion by the force and evidence of truth, is a victory gained over error, and an honourable advancement in their own knowledge in the things of God.

6. That they would apply themselves with sincere diligence to consider the evidence of Scripture for any of the opinions that I have proposed or maintained, rather than labour to invent objections as fast as ever they can against it, as though they knew it was false before-hand; for if we read a treatise which contains ever so much truth, with a previous aversion to the doctrines of it, and a resolution before-hand to object against it all the way, we hinder ourselves from attending to the force of reason, and prevent our minds from taking in the evidence on which any doctrine is founded.

I grant it is necessary that all just objections should have their due weight, and they ought to be well considered in our inquiries after truth: Yet when any doctrine has many and strong arguments from Scripture and reason advanced to support it, one difficulty or two, which at present seem hard to be solved, should not utterly forbid our assent; since, as Bishop Fowler well observes, "There are scarce any notions so plain as to be

uncapable of being obscured and called in question, except the first and self-evident principles, or the immediate consequences of them." Because we understand not what is difficult, we must not merely for that reason deny that which is clear and plain; and if we will refuse to believe any proposition until we are perfectly able to master all objections against it, we may be sceptics all our days, both in matters of philosophy and religion, and even in some doctrines of the highest importance; and with all our pretences to learning, may finish our lives like mere fools.

7. That they would acknowledge that the glories of our blessed Lord are so many, so various, and so sublime, that there is but very little of them yet known, in comparison of the unknown glories which he possesses; and that a sincere love to Christ, and a zeal for his honour, should lead them out with pleasure and expectation to meet any further discoveries of this kind, which may be drawn from the word of God. That they would withhold themselves from a hasty refusal to receive all such manifestations, lest they should prevent the growing honours of their Saviour.

8. While I am tracing these early and sublime glories of our blessed Redeemer, by the gleams or the rays of light which are scattered in several parts of his word, I entreat my friends, that they would not be too severe in their censures of any mistaken step, while I own myself fallible, and am ready to retract any mistake.

If they should meet with any expressions which in their opinion do not stand so perfectly just and square with other of my sentiments in some distant parts of these essays, I would persuade myself they will be so candid as to interpret them in a consistence with the general scope and design of my argument, and with my avowed sense of things in the more important points of religion.

It is an easy matter to be led a little astray in pursuing such an uncommon track through the third heavens, the present exalted residence of our glorified Saviour; and in tracing the foot-steps of our blessed Lord through long past ages of his pre-existent state, be they never so certain, which commenced before these lower heavens were formed, or time was measured by the sun and moon. Succeeding writers may more happily conduct themselves in so glorious an inquiry, and correct my wanderings: But I am persuaded my gracious Redeemer will forgive what errors he remarks in these sincere attempts to advance his honour: And I hope my pious readers will find some degrees of entertainment, as well as improvement, and feel some devout thoughts awakened in them sufficient to influence their charity and candour.

9. That they would not imagine that all these notions and opinions which may be something new and strange to them, are pure inventions of my own, and mere sallies of imagination.

I must acknowledge, indeed, that I have endeavoured to carry on the hints I have met with in some great and honoured writers to a further length, and to trace the golden thread of these discoveries through far distant scenes and ages, by the light both of reason and Scripture: But as I have no ambition to assume these discoveries to

myself, so I ought in justice to stand secure from those censures which a heated and warm zeal for ancient land-marks, is ready to throw upon every thing that bears the appearance of novelty.

I have therefore, in the end of some of these discourses or inquiries, cited several writers of name and eminence, and called in the assistance of their authority to cover these essays from the sudden and severe reproaches of those who reverence the names of those great, and learned, and pious men. And what such venerable authors thought very consistent with orthodox doctrine, and so useful and necessary to support the honours of our blessed Lord, I humbly hope and request that my readers will not hastily abandon and reject as heresy, and renounce it at once without due consideration of the arguments.

And as for those who have a great regard for the writings of so ingenious and so pious a man, so evangelical an author, and so great a divine, as Dr. Thomas Goodwin, I might recommend to them the perusal of his treatise of *The Royalty of Jesus Christ, as God-man*, which I have abridged here; and before they read these Essays I might entreat them to read this abridgment, though I dare not pretend to give my assent to all his opinions in these papers, or support them.

Give me leave to finish this preface, so far as it relates to the discourses on the pre-existent soul of Christ, and the extensive powers of his glorified human nature, in the modest and amiable language of that ingenious gentleman who wrote many years ago of *The progressive Knowledge of Souls in the future State:* "If any thing should drop from my pen in the progress of this discourse which may seem too affirmative, and hardly reconcileable with a becoming modesty and jealousy, I desire those luxuriances of expressions may receive some abatements, and be made fairly agreeable thereunto. For although I may possibly be indifferently well persuaded of the truth of what I shall discourse, yet I am not certain: It is not improbable that I should be mistaken: I am of human race, and have no privilege of exemption from human infirmities and errors."

Whether the proofs that I shall make of this proposed theme be valid or invalid, the reader must determine when he hath weighed and considered them. I am content that they be esteemed just as they are. If my arguments be thought invalid, and my opinion rejected, it will be no matter of provocation to me. If they be thought cogent, and my opinion worthy of acceptation with pious and ingenious men, perchance I may be a little pleased therein. But if it may advance the honour and the love of God my Saviour, and make heaven the more acceptable to the thoughts and meditations of Christians, because we have so glorious a Mediator dwelling there, I am sure I shall greatly rejoice.

DISCOURSE I.

THE

GLORY OF CHRIST AS GOD-MAN DISPLAYED,

BY A SURVEY OF THE VISIBLE APPEARANCES OF CHRIST AS GOD, BEFORE HIS INCARNATION.

SECTION I.

AN HISTORICAL ACCOUNT OF THESE APPEARANCES.

SINCE the socinian doctrines have been effectually refuted by many learned writers, especially in the last century, it is now, I hope, confessed almost universally in the British islands, that our blessed Saviour had a real existence, long before he appeared in flesh and blood, and dwelt among men. It is also generally acknowledged that he often appeared in a visible manner under the patriarchal and mosaical dispensations, assuming the names, and sustaining the character and person of the great and blessed God. Yet it has been a matter of contest in these latter years, as well as in the ancient days of Arius, whether Christ in his complex person, include godhead or not? Or whether he be nothing else but a creature, or a mere contingent being, and is only called God, as sustaining and representing the character and person of one who is infinitely above him, even the great and eternal God? This is the great and important question of the age.

Now that this matter may be determined with more evidence and certainty, let us first trace out the account which the Old Testament gives us of the various seasons and occasions on which *God, the Lord,** *the Lord God, Jehovah, the Almighty, the God of Abraham, &c.* is said to appear amongst men, with a few remarks on them in passing; and afterward we shall be enabled to draw more particular inferences from these Scriptures concerning the deity of Christ, and his appearances before his incarnation.

Whosoever will read the four first chapters of *Genesis* with due attention, will find a

* Let the unlearned reader take notice, that there are two Hebrew words, *viz. Jehovah* and *Adon* or *Adonai*, both which our translators render *Lord*. The first, *viz. Jehovah*, signifies *the eternal* or *unchangeable*, and has been sufficiently proved to be the proper name of the great God, the God of Israel, peculiar to him, and incommunicable to creatures; and it is written always in capital letters, LORD, for distinction sake: *Thou, whose name alone is* JEHOVAH, *art the Most High over all the earth*, Psalm lxxxiii. 18; though it had been much better if the Hebrew name, *Jehovah*, itself had been always written in our English Bibles, that the hearer might distinguish it as well as the reader. The other name, *viz. Adon* or *Adonai*, is also translated *Lord*, and written in small letters, because it is not the proper name of the great God; it signifies his lordship or dominion, and is not so peculiar nor incommunicable.

Now let it be observed, that in almost every place which I have cited to shew the various appearances of the Lord to men, it is the name *Jehovah* is used, which the reader will find distinguished by capital letters in the English Bible.

very plain and easy representation of the great God, first creating all things, and afterwards appearing to Adam, Eve, and Cain, and conversing with them with a human voice, and very probably in a human shape too. I am well assured that any common reader who begins the Bible without prejudices or prepossessions of any kind, would naturally frame this idea under the words and expressions of Moses, the sacred writer.

In the first place, God represents his own design of creating man in this manner, *viz.* Gen. i. 26, *And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, &c.* Verse 27, *So God created man after his own image; in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them: And God blessed them, and said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply, &c.* Verses 29, 30, *And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed,—to you it shall be for meat, and to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, &c.*

Now it is very probable, that when God had made man, he appeared to him in man's own shape, and thus made it known to Adam that he had formed him in his own image, even as to his body; that is, in such a form or figure as God himself did, and would frequently assume, in order to converse with man: And perhaps God also might acquaint Adam with the natural and moral perfections of his own soul, *viz.* knowledge, righteousness, and holiness, wherein he resembled his Maker, and bare his likeness, as well as that God himself sometimes assumed the figure of a man.

Let it be noted here also, that when God blessed some part of the animal creation, it is expressed only, *God said,* but not to them as hearers, *Be fruitful and multiply,* as *verse* 22; that is, God put forth a divine volition or command concerning the multiplication of inferior creatures; but he spake to Adam and Eve directly as his hearers, and most likely with a human voice, for he *said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply;* and told them that he had given them the fruits of the earth for their food, and that he had given it also to the fowls and the beasts: Whereas God is not said to speak thus concerning food to the beasts or to the fowls themselves, but only told Adam what he had appointed for their common food. This looks like a human appearance conversing with him, and will appear more evidently in what follows:

Gen. ii. 16, *And the* Lord *God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat; but the tree of the knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat of it.* Verse 19, *And the* Lord *God brought every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air, unto Adam, to see what he would call them.* Verse 22, *And the rib which the* Lord *God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.* All this seems to be the transactions and language of the Lord God appearing in human shape, and with human voice to Adam.

Gen. iii. 8, *And they heard the voice of the* Lord *God walking in the garden, in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the* Lord *God, amongst the trees of the garden.*—9, *And the* Lord *God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?*—10, *And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden; and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.*—11, *And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? &c.* Verse 13, *And the* Lord *God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.* Verse 21, *Unto Adam and to his wife did the* Lord *God make coats of skins, and clothed them, &c.*

I think there is a very plain description of a visible appearance and a human voice in this scene, and these dialogues. Adam and his wife could never be said to hide

themselves from the presence of the Lord, if he had not before manifested a visible presence to them; nor could they know his voice, if he had not conversed with them by a human voice before: This is a pretty plain proof that God conversed with them in a human manner in the foregoing instances. Nor yet could they have hidden themselves from a mere voice, amongst trees, nor could they have been ashamed of their nakedness before a mere voice, if they had not known God before, by a visible presence and appearance, whose face they now avoided among the trees.

It is probable that God not only conversed with Adam and Eve, but with their children and family in the same manner, in the beginning of the world; for you read a plain dialogue between God and Cain, Gen. iv. 6—14, *And the* LORD *said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth?—If thou dost well, shalt thou not be accepted? And the* LORD *said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: Am I my brother's keeper?* And God replied again, *What hast thou done? The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground, &c.—A fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth: And Cain said unto the* LORD, *My punishment is greater than I can bear: Behold, thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth, and from thy face I shall be hid.* Verse 16, *And Cain went out from the presence of the* LORD. Surely every reader among the Jews, for whom Moses wrote this, would have an idea of the great God's appearing and conversing with Adam and his household in a human shape, and after the manner of men; and then Cain went out from the presence of God.

But whatsoever shape appeared to them, I think it must be granted, that God appeared in a visible manner, where the expressions are so plain and so strong, where the repetitions are so many, that the LORD, that is, JEHOVAH, the LORD *God*, appeared, and sat, or walked, and did and spake this or that. In so many transactions and dialogues, it is very hard to suppose that there was nothing else but a created angel came, assuming the name of God. Surely such sort of representations would lead all common readers into a gross mistake, if God himself were not here at all in a special and visible manner.

It is very probable there might be some glorious light, some awful brightness, that frequently surrounded and invested this human form, in which God appeared and conversed with man, and which might be called his divine form, that he might be thereby in some measure distinguished and well known as God. Doubtless the LORD, JEHOVAH, when he came down to visit men, carried some ensign of divine majesty with him, some splendid cloud or luminous rays about him, when he designed that men should know God was there. It was such a light appeared often at the door of the tabernacle, and fixed its abode on the ark between the cherubim, and by the Jews was called the *shechinah*, that is, *the habitation of God.* And thence God is described in Scripture as "dwelling in light," and "clothed with light as with a garment," *Psalm* civ. 2; but in the midst of this brightness there seems to have been sometimes a human shape and figure. And probably this heavenly brightness was that divine clothing, that form of God, of which Christ divested himself when he came to tabernacle, or dwell in flesh, with a design of humiliation, though he might converse with men heretofore arrayed in this lightsome robe, this covering or habitation of God, which also he put on at his transfiguration in the mount, when "his garments were white as the light;" and at his ascension to heaven, when "a bright cloud received or invested him," and when he appeared to John, *Rev.* i. 13.

And as God visibly conversed with Adam and his family, so also with several of the patriarchs. He was seen often by them, especially such of them as were most eminent for holiness in a degenerate age, and conversed familiarly with them in a visible manner: And thence probably came the phrase, *Enoch walked with God*, Gen. v. 22, 24; and *Noah walked with God*, Gen. vi. 9, which, in process of time, became a common phrase to signify a pious man, who conversed much with God in a spiritual manner, though those visible appearances were not then vouchsafed to him.

When God had chosen Abraham to be his peculiar favourite, he appeared to him frequently; Acts vii. 2, 3, *The God of glory appeared to our Father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia—and said unto him, Get thee out of thy country, &c.* And when he came into the land of Canaan, Gen. xii. 7, *The Lord appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land; and there builded he an altar unto the* Lord, *who appeared unto him;* or, as the Hebrew expresses it, "who was seen by him." These seem to be visible appearances surrounded with light or glory, and therefore it is said, the God of glory appeared to him.

Gen. xv. 1, 2, *After these things, the Word of the* Lord *came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram; I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward: And Abram said, Lord* God, *what wilt thou give me? &c.* Here was a vision, and here was a voice; the person that appeared was the Lord God, or Jehovah, *Elohim;* and yet it is said, "The Word of the Lord came to him in a vision;" probably this signifies Jesus Christ, the *Logos*, or Word of God. And yet, *verse* 7, he assumes the name of Jehovah: *I am the* Lord, *that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees;* and *verse* 17, "a smoaking furnace and a burning lamp passed between the pieces of the divided sacrifice," in token of God's making a covenant with Abraham; as it follows, verse 18, *In that same day, the* Lord, or Jehovah, *made a covenant with Abram.**

Gen. xvi. 7, *The angel of the* Lord found Hagar in the wilderness, and said unto her, verse 10, *I will multiply thy seed exceedingly;* and though he be called *the angel of the* Lord, in four places of this narrative, yet, verse 13, *She called the name of the* Lord, or Jehovah, *that spake unto her, Thou God seest me.* The person who appeared, therefore, seems to be one who was an *angel of the* Lord, and was also *the* Lord, or Jehovah.

Gen. xvii. 1, *When Abram was ninety years old and nine, the* Lord, or Jehovah, *appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect.* Verses 3—8, *And Abram fell on his face: And God talked with him,*

* Here let it be observed, that the ancient Jews, such as the targumists or commentators on Scripture, and Philo, represent the *Memra*, the *Logos*, that is, the *Word of the Lord*, as appearing to the patriarchs in almost all these places where God is said to appear; and of this divine Word they give us two different ideas, as I have shewn elsewhere: The one is, that it signifies something in and of the true and eternal godhead, some distinct principle in the divine nature itself, which is called *the Word*, or *Wisdom of God*, whereby God revealed himself to men. The other is the idea of some most excellent angel in whom God resided, and by whom God manifested himself, and who was upon that account called *the Word of God*. Their writings lead us plainly to both these ideas: Nor is it at all unreasonable to suppose, that both these ideas may be united in one, and thus compose a sort of complex person, an angel inhabited by true godhead under the idea of divine Wisdom. Some have called this person a god-angel in all these visible appearances; and why may not our blessed Saviour be this god-angel, by reason of his human soul pre-existent and united to godhead in its unincarnate or angelic state, that is, before he became complete God-man, and afterward he was made *a little lower than the angels*, by dwelling in flesh and blood? See more of this matter in other writings. But this I do but just mention as I pass along, and in the margin only, because I would not enter into any *modus* of explaining the internal distinctions in the godhead in these discourses; Especially since these discourses agree well enough with any known scheme of internal distinctions in the godhead.

saying—Behold, my covenant is with thee, &c. to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, &c. and I will be their God. Here is another dialogue; and *God said unto Abraham—and Abraham said unto God,* verses 9, 15, 18; and in verse 22, *he left off talking with him, and God went up from Abraham;* that is, the visible appearance ascended out of Abraham's sight.

Gen. xviii. 1, *And the* LORD, Jehovah, *appeared unto him in the plains of Mamre; and he sat in the tent-door in the heat of the day, and he lift up his eyes and looked, and lo, three men stood* before *him; and when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent-door, and bowed himself toward the ground; and said, My Lord, if now I have found favour in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant.* His first address was made to one of the three, who seemed to bear superior glory; afterward he invites them all to eat: *And he took butter and milk,* verse 8, *and the calf which he had dressed, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree, and they did eat.* Verse 10, *And he said—Sarah thy wife shall have a son;* at which tidings, when Sarah laughed within herself, *the* LORD, or Jehovah, *said unto Abraham, Wherefore did Sarah laugh?* verse 13. *Is any thing too hard for the* LORD, or Jehovah? *verse* 14. Now I think it is evident, that one of these three men was expressly called JEHOVAH; two of them went onward toward Sodom, but he that is called JEHOVAH seemed to stay behind. *Verses* 16, 17, and 22, *the men,* that is, the two men, *turned their faces from thence, and went towards Sodom; but Abraham stood yet before* Jehovah. And a long dialogue there ensues between Abraham and the LORD, or Jehovah, about the sparing of Sodom, wherein Abraham addresses him as the true God. In verse 33, *the* LORD, Jehovah, *went his way, as soon as he had left communing with Abraham, and Abraham returned to his place.* And Gen. xix. 1, *there came two angels to Sodom at even,* which most probably were the two men that left Abraham while Jehovah tarried and talked with him. Now it is evident in the conversation, that neither of these two angels assumed the name of Jehovah; for, *verse* 13, they say, *The cry of the* men of Sodom *is waxen great before the face of the* LORD, that is, Jehovah, *and* Jehovah *hath sent us to destroy it.* This narrative gives us a plain account of the great God appearing to Abraham, and conversing with him in the form of a man; for it is said, he "appeared to Abraham, or was seen of him, talked with him, and went up from him."

Gen. xxi. 17—19, *God heard the voice of the lad,* Ishmael; *and the angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven—Arise, lift up the lad—for I will make him a great nation.—And God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water.* Here is a person speaking, who seems to assume something of godhead, who yet is called *the angel of God:* But whether there was any visible appearance, the Scripture saith not.

Gen. xxii. 11, 12, *The angel of the* LORD *called* to Abraham *out of heaven, and said —Lay not thine hand upon the lad,* that is, Isaac—*for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from* ME. Verse 14, *And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh.* Verse 15—18, *And the angel of the* LORD *called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, and said, By myself have I sworn, saith the* LORD—*that in blessing I will bless thee—because thou hast obeyed my voice.* Here also is an angel of Jehovah, who seems to assume the character of deity: But whether there was a visible appearance, or only a voice, is not certain.

Gen. xxvi. 2, 3, *And the* LORD, Jehovah, *appeared unto Isaac, and said, Go not down into Egypt—sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee—I will*

perform the oath which I sware unto Abraham thy father. And, *verse* 24, when Isaac went to Beersheba, *the* LORD *appeared unto him, the same night, and said, I am the God of Abraham thy father: Fear not, for I am with thee.* Besides these two, I remember not any other appearance of God to Isaac.

The two first appearances which we read that God made unto Jacob were both in a dream; one in Gen. xxviii. 12, 13, *the angels of God ascending and descending on* a ladder, set up on the earth and reaching to heaven; *and behold the* LORD, or Jehovah, *stood above it, and said, I am* Jehovah, *the God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac;* and verse 16, *Jacob said, Surely the* LORD *is in this place.* Gen. xxxi. 11, 13, *And the angel of God spake unto me in a dream, saying, Jacob: And I said, Here am I: And he said—I am the God of Bethel, where thou vowedst a vow unto me.* Here is an angel, in a divine or inspired dream, calling himself *the God of Bethel.* And verse 24, *God came to Laban the Syrian in a dream by night, and said unto him, Take heed that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad.* Doubtless these ancients had sufficient rules of distinction to know when such a dream was divine.

Gen. xxxii. 24—30, *And Jacob was left alone,* when his wives and children were gone over the ford, *and there wrestled a* MAN *with him until the breaking of the day.—And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh:* And Jacob replied, *I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.—And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel; for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed.—And Jacob called the name of that place,* PENIEL, *for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved.** Now if we compare this history with *Hosea* xii. 3, 4, 5, we shall find that this person who wrestled with Jacob, and is here called *a man,* and also *God,* is by the prophet called *God* and *an angel,* and the LORD *God of hosts,* even JEHOVAH. The words are these: *By his strength he had power with God; yea, he had power over the angel, and prevailed; he wept, and made supplications unto him; he found him in Bethel, and there he spake with us; even the* LORD *God of hosts,* JEHOVAH *is his memorial.*

Gen. xxxv. 9, 11, 13, 15, *And God appeared unto Jacob again, when he came out of Padanaram, and blessed him.—And God said unto him, I am God Almighty, be fruitful and multiply, &c.—And God went up from him, in the place where he talked with him.—And Jacob called the name of the place where God spake with him, Bethel.*

Gen. xlvi. 2, 3, *God spake unto Israel, in the visions of the night, and said—I am God, the God of thy father; fear not to go down into Egypt.* In *Gen.* xlviii. 3, Jacob rehearsed the former appearance of God to him, *God Almighty appeared unto me at Luz, in the land of Canaan, and blessed me.* And *verses* 15, 16, he blesses Joseph thus: *God before whom my fathers, Abraham and Isaac, did walk, the God which fed me all my life long unto this day, the angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads,*" that is the sons of Joseph. And in this recognition of the former appearances and favours of God, Jacob seems to make the *God of his fathers, Abraham and Isaac,* to be the same person with *the angel that redeemed him from all evil.*

After this I find no more such appearances of God unto men, till that glorious apparition to Moses in the burning bush.

Exod. iii. 2, 3, *And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of*

* We find here it was a very ancient opinion that "no man could bear the sight of God and live:" What is the true meaning of it, see in the following reflections on the appearance of the glory of God to Moses at the giving of the law, *Exod.* xix. and xx. and in the hole of the rock, *Exod.* xxxiii. 9.

the midst of a bush; and he looked, and behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. Verse 4, *And when the* LORD *saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses! And he said, Here am I.* Verse 5, *And he said, Draw not nigh hither; put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.* Verse 6, *Moreover he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God.* Verse 7, *And the* LORD *said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, &c.* Verse 13, *And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is his name? What shall I say unto them?* Verse 14, *And God said unto Moses,* I AM THAT I AM: *And he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel,* I AM *hath sent me unto you.* Verse 15, *And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The* LORD *God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: This is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations,* Chapter iv. 1, *And Moses answered and said, But behold—they will say, The* LORD *hath not appeared unto thee.* And in order to prove that the LORD, or JEHOVAH, had appeared unto him, *The* LORD *said unto him,* verse 3, *Cast thy rod on the ground, &c.* Verse 5, *That they may believe that the* LORD *God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath appeared unto thee.* And thus the sacred dialogue between God and Moses proceeds. This same history is briefly repeated by Stephen, *Acts* vii. 30—36.

Whoever reads this narrative, will plainly find, that this person who appeared to Moses, was both *the angel of the* LORD, and was *God* himself: For it is said, *Moses was afraid to look upon God.* He is called *an angel* by the sacred writer at his first appearance, but he is also called in the succeeding parts of the narrative, *God, the* LORD, JEHOVAH, *the God of Abraham, &c.* The sacred historian calls him so frequently, and he himself roundly and strongly calls himself so. He assumes the highest names and titles of the supreme God, I AM THAT I AM, &c. And that in the most solemn and majestic manner that it is possible God himself could do, if he designed never so plainly to declare his own personal presence.

Now I would humbly propose these questions, to every reader: Whether, if he should put himself as it were in the place of Moses, he would not have been fully convinced, and believed, that the great and eternal God was the person actually immediately present in the burning bush in an extraordinary manner? Whether he could avoid believing that the person who spake to him was really the true and eternal God? And though he might suppose that it was an angel that appeared there, whether such strong, express, and solemn assumptions of the divine nature, would not lead him to believe that God and this angel, at least in that season, and for that purpose, were so far united as to become as it were one agent, one speaker, one complex person? And whether Moses himself could have any other idea of this appearance but as God, the great and blessed God, dwelling or residing in, and acting and speaking by this angel? Whether the mere idea of a creature, an angel sent as a vicegerent or deputy to speak in the name of God, could answer these sublime assertions of the sacred writer, and these

divine characters so strongly assumed by the angel? And whether any unprejudiced reader could understand this to be the mere messenger of an absent God, since there is no notice through all this narrative that he was merely an angel sent from God, considered as absent, to carry a message to Moses; but rather many notices, given both by the person appearing in the bush, and by the sacred historian, that God himself was there, or such an angel who was also the great and blessed God?

Exod. iv. 24, *And it came to pass by the way, in the inn, that the* LORD *met* Moses, *and sought to kill him*, upon which Zipporah circumcised her son. This seems to be an apparition of the Lord, or Jehovah, in the form of a man, something like God's wrestling with Jacob, and giving Moses a terrible reproof, because he had neglected to make his son pass under that sacred rite of circumcision.

Exod. vi. 2, 3, *And God spake unto Moses, and said unto him, I am the* LORD; *and I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty; but by my name* JEHOVAH *was I not known to them.* Can any thing more strongly express the ancient appearance of the true God himself to the patriarchs, who also appeared lately to Moses under a new name?

After this you have a multitude of instances, wherein the Lord, or Jehovah, conversed freely with Moses upon every occasion; whether under any visible appearance or figure, the Scripture does not acquaint us, except in the following instances:

Exod. xiii. 21, *And the* LORD, or Jehovah, *went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way, and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light;* who in *Exod.* xiv. 19, is called *the angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel;* he now *removed and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them.* And in *verse* 24, of this chapter, he is again called JEHOVAH: *It came to pass in the morning-watch, the* LORD, that is Jehovah, *looked unto the host of the Egyptians, through the pillar of fire and of the cloud.*

Exod. xvi. 9, Moses bid Aaron say to the people, *Come near before the* LORD; and verse 10, *as Aaron spake unto the whole congregation—behold, the glory of the* LORD *appeared in the cloud;* verses 11, 12, *and the* LORD *spake unto Moses, saying, I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel—and ye shall know that I am the* LORD *your God.*

Exod. xvii. 5, 6, 7, *The* LORD *said unto Moses, Go on before the people, and take with thee the elders of Israel.—Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb, and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it.—And he called the name of the place Massah and Meribah, because of the chiding of the children of Israel, and because they tempted the* LORD. Here God promises to stand before Moses on the rock, and the Israelites are said "to tempt the Lord," which is applied to Christ, 1 *Cor.* x. 4; this rock, on which God stood, is called *Christ;* that is, the type of Christ in whom God dwelt. And *verse* 9, they are said to "tempt Christ;" that is, they tempted God, appearing in a visible manner as standing on a rock.

The other place where they tempted God, is *Numb.* xxi. 5, 6, for want of bread and water, *and the* LORD *sent fiery serpents,* &c. Both these are joined together, *Deut.* viii. 15. And in both places we may justly say Christ was tempted; that is,

God appearing as the leader of Israel in the wilderness: For if it is expressly asserted, they tempted Christ, when the serpents slew them, where there is not any express account of a visible appearance of God in the history, much more may it be said, "they tempted Christ," when Moses smote the rock, where there was a visible appearance of God as standing on the rock.

Exod. xix. 2, 3, *Israel camped before the mount,* Sinai, *and Moses went up unto God, and the* Lord *called unto him out of the mountain.* Verse 9, *And the* Lord *said unto Moses, Behold, I come unto thee in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with thee.* Verse 18, *And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the* Lord *descended upon it in fire.* Verse 19, *Moses spake, and God answered him by a voice.* Verse 20, *And the* Lord *called Moses up to the top of the mount, and Moses went up.* Exod. xx. 1, 2, 3, *And God spake all these words, saying, I am the* Lord *thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before Me, &c.* Verse 19, *And the people said unto Moses—Let not God speak with us, lest we die.* Verses 21, 22, *And the people stood afar off, and Moses drew near unto the thick darkness where God was; and the* Lord *said unto Moses, Thus thou shalt say unto the children of Israel, Ye have seen that I have talked with you from heaven.* Thus God gave his laws to his people from mount Sinai; but neither Moses nor the people did at this time see any similitude or figure; for so Moses tells them, Deut. iv. 12, *And the* Lord *spake unto you out of the midst of the fire: Ye heard the voice of the words; but ye saw no similitude; only ye heard a voice.*

And indeed it is probable that Moses never saw any form of the countenance, or face of a man, in all the appearances of God to him: And though it be said, Deut. xxxiv. 10, *There arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the* Lord *knew face to face;* yet we know that the same expression is used concerning the people of Israel, Deut. v. 4, *The Lord talked with you face to face in the mount, out of the midst of the fire.* Therefore this can mean no more than that God spake with Moses, and with the people, as one man does to another, when they mutually see each other's faces; though the favour and intimacy to which Moses was admitted, was much greater than what God bestowed on the people; because Moses held long dialogues with God several times, and could go and ask him any thing, almost upon every occasion. But still it seems probable, I think, that Moses never saw any human face in his converses with God; for when Moses, in *Exod.* xxxiii. 18, desired to see the glory of God, God denied his request, and said, verse 20, *Thou canst not see my face; for there shall no man see me and live:* Upon the whole, therefore, this expression, *face to face,* in these texts, must signify no more, than a condescending manner of conversing with men by a voice, as one man converses with another, when they see each other's faces: Though it is abundantly evident that some of the more ancient patriarchs conversed with God in the form of a man, and probably saw a human face at least in a confused vision, and as has been before declared.

Yet there remains some difficulty still in what sense God said, *Thou canst not see my face; for there shall no man see me and live,* when it is probable that Abraham and Jacob, long before, and afterward Joshua and Gideon, saw the face of

that angel who is called JEHOVAH: And my reason for it is this, because they took him to be a man when they first saw and spake with him, and therefore at first perhaps there was no peculiar lustre of glory, or cloud to conceal his face and distinguish him from a common man.

Answer. 1. It is granted that this expression cannot signify that no living man should ever see an apparition of God with a human face, at least in a general glimpse, for the reasons which are just now mentioned. 2. Nor can this awful expression of "not seeing the face of God and live," signify that no living man can see the essence of God, as he is a Spirit, and invisible to bodily eyes; for in this sense angels and human souls are invisible as well as God himself. Therefore, 3. I think it must intend that no man in this mortal state can bear the sight of such intense rays of light and glory as perhaps he assumes in heaven, and as would become the great God to assume on earth, if he appeared in all the corporeal splendour due to divine majesty appearing among men, as in Christ's appearance to John, *Rev.* i. 17, he fell down as dead. And this exposition is yet more probable, if we consider that St. Paul describes God, as *dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto;* and upon this account it is added, *whom no man hath seen, nor can see;* 1 Tim. vi. 16. For in this sense, our God would be *a consuming fire,* Heb. xii. 29, and that in the most literal sense.

It is very probable, that the unsufferable blaze of the glory on the mercy-seat was always allayed with the cloud intervening, which might be an emblem or type of *God manifest in the flesh;* that is, God dwelling personally in the man Jesus, or in the flesh at his incarnation. And it is probable also for this reason, that the high-priest, when he went into the most holy place, was to make the smoke of the incense arise between this glory and himself, that he might not die by his curiosity or too near approach.

Exod. xxiii. 20, God says unto Moses, *Behold, I send an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared.* Verse 21, *Beware of him, and obey his voice; provoke him not: For he will not pardon your transgressions, for my name is in him.* Here some critical writers have remarked two things: 1. That *the name of God* is sometimes put for God himself, as Psalm xx. 1, *The name of the God of Jacob defend thee:* So that God himself most probably dwelt in this angel. 2. It is said, my "name is in the midst of him, בקרבו," which intimates a real indwelling; which also further appears, because it is said, *he will not pardon your transgressions;* now an authority to forgive, or not to forgive sins, is a prerogative of God. And why may we not suppose the fulness of the godhead dwelling in this angel, who was a spirit, as well as the fulness of the godhead dwelling bodily in the complete human nature of Jesus Christ when he took a body; as *Col.* ii. 9? I add yet further, that we have much reason to believe that this is the same angel, that so often assumed the sublimest names of God in his appearing both to Moses and to the patriarchs.

Exod. xxiv. 9, *Then went up Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel.* Verse 10, *And they saw the God of Israel, and there was under his feet, as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness.* Verse 11, *And upon the nobles of the children of Israel he laid not his hand;* that is, he did not destroy them, though they saw God; and

it follows, *also they saw God, and did eat and drink.* Here it is probable they saw nothing but a very bright or fiery cloud, as in *verse* 16. But out of the midst of it God perhaps might converse with Moses; otherwise how could they know that this was the God of Israel? But I am inclined to believe they saw nothing of any human form; though indeed it is expressed, "there was a paved work of sapphire under his feet," which may signify only beneath him, that is, beneath this fiery cloud; but it is certain, his face they saw not. The children of Israel were so prone to idolatry, that God never gave them, nor perhaps even to Moses, the sight of a human face in all their visions, that there might be no foundation for framing an image like him; *Deut.* iv. 15, 16. And it is evident that when *Moses went up into the mount*, verse 15, it was only a cloud covered the mount, and, verse 16, *the glory of the* LORD *abode upon mount Sinai;* and, verse 17, *the sight of the glory of the* LORD *was like devouring fire on the top of the mount;* whence probably St. Paul might derive that expression, Heb. xii. 29, *Our God is a consuming fire.*

Exod. xxv. 21, *And thou shalt put the mercy-seat above upon the ark:* Verse 22, *And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee, from above the mercy-seat, from between the two cherubim, which are upon the ark of the testimony.* Exod. xxviii. 30, 35, when Aaron goes into the holy place, where the mercy-seat stood, he is said to "go in *before the* LORD." Upon this account *the* LORD *of hosts*, is said to "dwell between the cherubim," 1 *Sam.* iv. 4, and 2 *Sam.* vi. 2, and *Psalm* lxxx. 1, and xcix. 1. On this account also, when the ark was moved from place to place, God himself is said to remove, *Psalm* xlvii. When David carried the ark into Zion, verse 5, *God is gone up with a shout, the* LORD *with the sound of a trumpet.* And when the ark came into the tabernacle or temple, Psalm xxiv. 7, *Lift up your heads, O ye gates; be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in:* Verse 10, *The* LORD *of hosts, he is the King of glory.* And when Solomon built the temple, and brought in the ark of God to it, 2 Chron. vi. 41, Solomon said, *Arise, O* LORD *God, into thy resting-place, thou and the ark of thy strength;* which is repeated *Psalm* cxxxii. 8.

And concerning Zion, it is said, Psalm lxviii. 16, *This is the hill which God desireth to dwell in.* Verse 17, *The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels: The* LORD *is among them as in Sinai, in the holy place.* "As God appeared on Sinai in a visible cloud, in fire or glory, where thousands of angels surrounded him, so God dwelt in Zion, over the mercy-seat, in a visible and bright cloud, between the cherubim, representing the attendance of angels." Then follows, verse 18, *Thou hast ascended on high; thou hast led captivity captive*, which is applied to Christ, *Ephes.* iv. 8. Thus the ascent of the ark of God to Zion, was a type of the ascension of Christ to heaven: For as God dwelt upon the ark between the cherubim in a bright cloud, under the jewish dispensation, and thence communicated his mind to men, and was there solemnly invoked and worshipped, so the "fulness of the godhead dwelt bodily in the man Christ Jesus, *Col.* ii. 9; and thus God in Christ reveals himself to us, and is worshipped and invoked by us under the christian dispensation; but still with this difference, that the union between God and man in Christ Jesus is much more near, more intimate and glorious, so as to make one complex person or God-man, and it is so constant as

never to be dissolved; for Christ, who is *of the seed of David after the flesh*, is by this union, *God over all, blessed for evermore.* See *Rom.* ix. 5.

Exod. xxxi. 18, when God *had made an end of communing with* Moses *on mount Sinai*, he gave unto him *two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God.* This seems to intimate a human shape giving the tables to Moses, but not the vision of a human face.

In *Exod.* xxxiii. 2, 3, when Israel had offended God by the golden calf, he said, *I will send an angel before thee, and I will drive out the Canaanites, &c. for I will not go up in the midst of thee, for thou art a stiff-necked people, lest I consume thee in the way.* It is the opinion of Doctor Owen on this place, that the angel which God in his anger told them he would send before them, when he himself refused to go up in the midst of them, was different from that angel whom he promised to them, *Exod.* xxii. 21, " in whom the name of God was :" But upon their mourning and repentance, and upon the intercession of Moses, *verses* 4 and 14, God says, *My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest;* which is much the same thing as if he had said, " the angel of my presence shall go with thee," for so this angel, in whom the name of God dwelt, is called, *Isaiah* lxiii. 9, *In all their afflictions he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them.*

Exod. xxxiii. 9, *Moses entered into the tabernacle*, and *the cloudy pillar descended, and stood at the door of the tabernacle, and* the Lord* *talked with Moses.* Verse 10, *And all the people saw the cloudy pillar stand at the tabernacle-door; and all the people rose up and worshipped, every man in his tent-door.* Verse 11, *And the* Lord *spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend.* Yet, as I before intimated, perhaps this signifies only free mutual discourse, like human and friendly conversation; for, a few verses afterwards, God refused to let Moses see his face; *verse* 20, *Thou canst not see my face; for there shall no man see me and live.*

Upon this account it may be queried, whether Moses ever saw the likeness of a human face in all the appearances of God to him: Yet there seems to be the similitude of the back of a man, as to the shape of his body, in which God appeared to Moses at his request; for the Lord said, verse 21, *Behold, there is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock.* Verse 22, *And it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee into a clift of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by.* Verse 23, *And I will take away my hand, and thou shalt see my back parts; but my face shall not be seen.*

And accordingly in Exod. xxxiv. 5, *The Lord descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the* Lord. Verse 6, *And the* Lord *passed by before him, and proclaimed, The* Lord, *The* Lord *God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering*, &c. Verse 8, *And Moses made haste, and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshipped. Verse* 14, The Lord said, *Thou shalt worship no other god; for the* Lord, Jehovah, *whose name is jealous, is a jealous God.*

It is possible that these expressions of " God's covering Moses with his hand while

* Note, *The* Lord is not in the original in this place; and this is the only place that occurs to me, where the nominative case is wanting when God or the angel is said to talk with Moses out of the cloud; but *verse* 11, immediately it is said, *The* Lord that is, Jehovah, *spake to Moses face to face.* And *Exod.* xxxiv. 5, it is said, *The* Lord *descended in the cloud, and stood with* Moses *there, &c.* So that this single ellipsis or subintellection of the nominative case *Lord,* verse 9, ought not to be construed in opposition to all other places where the Lord himself is said to speak with Moses.

the glory of God passed by," and " Moses seeing the back parts of God," may signify no more than this, that in this particular appearance of God, he arrayed himself in beams of light of such unsufferable splendour, that it would have destroyed the body of Moses, had not God sheltered and protected him; and that the back parts which Moses saw, may only signify this same bright appearance after it was gone to a safer distance. Or we may suppose that there was a human form in this appearance, darting unsufferable light from his face, which, for that reason could not be seen; and that Moses saw the similitude of the back of a man, after he was past to some distance from him.

It is not improbable, but that in some of the other discoveries of God to Moses, he might appear in the eyes of Moses in a human form, with a bright, but not unsufferable shine of glory, covering all his stature, even as the face of Moses himself might appear in the eyes of the children of Israel, when the skin of his face shone so much, that they were afraid to come nigh him; *Exod.* xxxiv. 30. And there is a great probability of it, if we consider, that God said concerning Moses, Numb. xii. 8, *The similitude of the* Lord *shall he behold*, that is, God in the figure of a man, though not his face.

God had promised in *Exod.* xxix. 42, 43, that *at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation—I will meet with the children of Israel, and the tabernacle shall be sanctified by my glory.* This promise was accomplished, *Exod.* xl. 34, when the tabernacle was erected, *then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the* Lord *God filled the tabernacle.* Verse 35, *And Moses was not able* at that time *to enter into the tent*, or tabernacle, *of the congregation, because the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of the* Lord *filled the tabernacle.*

Levit. ix. 1, 4, *Moses called Aaron, and his sons, and the elders of Israel, and said—To-day the* Lord *will appear unto you.* Verse 5, *And all the congregation drew near, and stood before the* Lord. Verse 6, *And Moses said, This is the thing which the* Lord *commanded, that ye should do: And the glory of the* Lord *shall appear unto you.* And when Aaron had offered the appointed offerings for himself, and for the people, verse 23, *Moses and Aaron went into the tabernacle of the congregation; and came out, and blessed the people; and the glory of the* Lord *appeared unto all the people.* Verse 24, *And there came a fire out from before the* Lord, *and consumed upon the altar the burnt offering and the fat; which when all the people saw, they shouted, and fell on their faces.* Here it may be observed, that *the* Lord is said to appear to them, *verse* 4, when, *verse* 23, it was *the glory of the* Lord appearing to the people, that is, a bright light and a consuming fire; *verses* 23, 24.

Numb. xii. 5, *And the* Lord *came down in the pillar of the cloud, and stood in the door of the tabernacle, and called Aaron and Miriam; and they both came forth.* Verse 6, *And he said, Hear now my words: If there be a prophet among you, I the* Lord *will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream,* Verse 7, *My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house.* Verse 8, *With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the* Lord *shall he behold: Wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?* Verse 9, *And the anger of the* Lord *was kindled against them, and he departed.* Verse 10, *And the cloud departed from off the tabernacle, and behold, Miriam became leprous, white as snow.*

It is not easy to say what the precise difference is between the various ways of God's

ancient discoveries of himself to men; but I think thus much is very plain, which I before hinted, that though the common method of God's converse with the people and with Aaron, was by a voice proceeding from the bright cloud or *shechinah*, yet that Moses was admitted to a more intimate converse with God in a way of dialogue, as one man talks freely with another, which the Scripture calls *face to face*, and *mouth to mouth;* and on some particular occasions he beheld God in the shape or likeness of the body of a man, for it is said, *He shall behold the similitude of the Lord;* though perhaps a cloud of glory might always cover his face, because the face of God was not to be seen by him.

Numb. xxii. 9—11, *And God came unto Balaam, and said, What men are these with thee? And Balaam said unto God, Balak, the son of Zippor, king of Moab, hath sent unto me, saying—Come now curse the people,* that is, Israel. Verse 12, *And God said unto Balaam, Thou shalt not go with them, thou shalt not curse the people.* Verse 13, *And Balaam said unto the princes of Balak, The* Lord, or Jehovah, *refuseth to give me leave to go with you.* And *verse* 22, *&c.* there is *the angel of the* Lord meeting Balaam on the road to Moab, and conversing with him; but I do not find that this angel either assumes the name of *the* Lord, or is so called by the sacred writer: Unless we may infer thus much, by comparing what the angel said unto Balaam, verse 35, *The word that I shall speak unto thee, that thou shalt speak,* with *chap.* xxiii. 3, 4, *Balaam said unto Balak—Peradventure the* Lord *will come to meet me; and God met Balaam.* Verse 5, *And the* Lord, or Jehovah, *put a word in Balaam's mouth, and said, Return unto Balak, and thus shalt thou speak, &c.* Again, verse 16, *The* Lord, or Jehovah, *met Balaam, and put a word in his mouth, &c.* Chap. xxiv. 2—5, *And Balaam lifted up his eyes—and the Spirit of God came upon him; and he took up his parable, and said, The man—who heard the words of God, who saw the vision of the Almighty—having his eyes opened—hath said—How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob! &c.* Whether this be sufficient to determine this angel to be Jehovah, I leave to the reader.

Deut. li. 32, 33, *The* Lord *your God went in the way before you—in fire by night, to shew you by what way ye should go, and in a cloud by day.* Chap. iv. 12, *The* Lord *spake unto you out of the midst of the fire: Ye heard the voice of words, but saw no similitude, only ye heard a voice.* Verse 16, *Lest ye corrupt yourselves, and make you a graven image, the similitude of any figure, the likeness of male or female.*

Deut. xxiii. 13, *Thou shalt have a paddle upon thy weapon, and—thou shalt dig therewith, and—cover that which cometh from thee: For the* Lord *thy God walketh in the midst of thy camp, to deliver thee; therefore shall thy camp be holy, that he see no unclean thing in thee.* This text does not indeed prove any appearance of God, but may be only a representation of God walking through their camp after the manner of men, to impress a more awful idea of the presence of God upon the people of Israel, that they might abstain from all legal impurities of every kind.

Joshua v. 13, *When Joshua was by Jericho, he lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, there stood a man over-against him, with his sword drawn in his hand: And Joshua went unto him, and said unto him, Art thou for us, or for our adversaries?* Verse 14, *And he said, Nay, but as the captain of the host of the* Lord *am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, What saith my* Lord *unto his servant?* Verse 15, *And the captain of the* Lord's *host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot, for the place whereon thou standest is holy; and Joshua*

did so. Chap. vi. 2, *And the* LORD *said unto Joshua, See, I have given into thine hand Jericho, &c.* Here it seems evident, that *the captain of the host of the* LORD, is also called *the* LORD, or Jehovah; and Joshua is commanded, just as Moses was, to loose his shoe from his foot, because the place was holy, that is, because God himself was present there.

Judges ii. 1, *And an angel of the* LORD *came up from Gilgal to Bochim, and said, I made you go up out of Egypt, and have brought you into the land, which I sware unto your fathers; and I said, I will never break my covenant with you.* This was certainly a human appearance, for the angel came from Gilgal to Bochim, which plainly intimates a visible person moving or passing from one place to another; yet the words are as plainly the language of God; so that, in all probability, this was also the angel of God's presence.

Judges vi. 11, *And there came an angel of the* LORD, *and sat under an oak which was in Ophra—and Gideon threshed wheat by the wine-press.* Verse 12, *And the angel of the* LORD *appeared unto him, and said unto him, The* LORD, Jehovah, *is with thee, thou mighty man of valour.* Verse 13, *And Gideon said unto him, O my lord, if the* LORD, Jehovah, *be with us, why is all this befallen us?* Verse 14, *And the* LORD, Jehovah, *looked upon him, and said, Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites: Have not I sent thee?* Here is a long dialogue between the Lord and Gideon. Verse 20, *And the angel of God said unto him, Take the flesh and the unleavened cakes, and lay them upon this rock, and pour out the broth: And he did so.* Verse 21, *Then the angel of the* LORD *put forth the end of the staff that was in his hand, and touched the flesh and the unleavened cakes; and there rose up fire out of the rock, and consumed the flesh and the unleavened cakes: And the angel of the* LORD *departed out of his sight.* Verse 22, *And when Gideon perceived that he was an angel of the* LORD, *Gideon said, Alas, O Lord* GOD, *for because I have seen an angel of the* LORD *face to face.* Verse 23, *And the* LORD *said unto him, Peace be unto thee; fear not, thou shalt not die.*

On this transaction I make these few remarks:

1. This *angel* had doubtless a human shape, figure, and voice, for he sat under an oak; and Gideon brought him a present of flesh and cakes to eat, thinking at first, it might have been a man of God, or a prophet; though when the angel bid him offer it in sacrifice, and then consumed it by a miraculous fire, he perceived that it was no man, but an angel of God; and it is hardly to be supposed but that Gideon saw his face.

2. Here is an *angel of the* LORD, who by the sacred writer is several times called JEHOVAH; for these names, *the* LORD, or JEHOVAH, and *the angel of the* LORD, are used promiscuously by the historian, though Gideon did not know it was God himself.

3. The language which this angel speaks, is not such as would immediately determine Gideon to believe it was Jehovah, or God himself, who appeared; and therefore we find Gideon does not worship him, nor address him as Jehovah.

4. Though Gideon does not expressly call this angel, *God*, or *Jehovah*, but only perceived at last that he had seen *an angel of the* LORD, yet we may suppose that in

his recollection, he took it to be that peculiar "angel in whom God resided or dwelt," for he feared he should die because he had seen him. Now though there was an ancient and current opinion among the Israelites, that none could see the face of God and live, yet there does not seem to have been any such notion that death would ensue upon the sight of a common angel.

But however, whether Gideon supposed this angel to be inhabited by Jehovah or no, it is plain that the sacred historian calls him *Jehovah.*

Judges xiii. 3, *The angel of the* Lord *appeared unto the* wife of Manoah, *and said unto her—Thou shalt conceive and bear a son, &c.* Verse 6, *The woman came and told her husband, saying, A man of God came unto me, and his countenance was like the countenance of an angel of God, very terrible, &c.* Verse 8, *Then Manoah entreated the* Lord, or Jehovah, *and said—Let the man of God which thou didst send, come again to us.* Verse 9, *And God hearkened to the voice of Manoah; and the angel of God came again unto the woman;* and she called her husband, and Manoah said unto him, Verse 11, *Art thou the man that spakest unto the woman? And he said, I am.* Verse 15, *And Manoah said unto the angel of the* Lord, *Let us make ready a kid for thee.* Verse 16, *And the angel of the* Lord *said unto Manoah—I will not eat of thy bread; and if thou wilt offer a burnt-offering, thou must offer it unto the* Lord; *for Manoah knew not that he was an angel of the* Lord. Verse 17, *And Manoah said unto the angel of the* Lord, *What is thy name?* Verse 18, *And the angel of the* Lord *said unto him, Why askest thou after my name, seeing it is secret,* פלא or wonderful? (The same name which is given to Christ, Isaiah ix. 6, *His name shall be called, Wonderful.)* Verse 19, *So Manoah took a kid, with a meat-offering, and offered it to the* Lord; verse 20, *And the angel of the* Lord *ascended in the flame of the altar.* Verse 21, *Then Manoah knew that he was an angel of the* Lord. Verse 22, *And Manoah said unto his wife, We shall surely die, because we have seen God.* Here also is such an angel in whom God is supposed to reside, for Manoah said, *We have seen God,* and therefore he thought that they should both die.

I do not remember any appearance of God to David. He saw *the angel of the* Lord that was sent to spread a pestilence among the people, *by the threshing-place of Araunah the Jebusite,* 2 Sam. xxiv. 16. *And David spake unto the* Lord, or Jehovah, *when he saw the angel that smote the people, and said, Lo, I have sinned, and I have done wickedly.* But it does not plainly appear, by all the circumstances of the history, that this was that peculiar "angel in whom God dwelt," or that the angel was called *Jehovah.*

The Lord appeared also to Solomon, 1 *Kings* iii. 5, and ix. 2, but it was *in a dream by night,* whence therefore I derive no inferences at present.

1 *Kings* xxii. 19, 20, the prophet Micah said, *I saw the* Lord *sitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven standing by him, on his right-hand, and on his left; and the* Lord *said, Who shall persuade Ahab, &c.* But this seems to be a vision divinely represented to the imagination of the prophet, from whence therefore I infer nothing concerning God's real appearances.

Job iv. 13, when Eliphaz represents the apparition of a spirit before his face, in thoughts from the visions of the night, he does not give us sufficient ground to form any conclusions concerning the real appearance, either of God or an angel, in a book of

such sublime poetry, wherein this is introduced in the manner of what the poets call a machine.

Isaiah vi. 1, *In the year that king Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple.* Verse 2, *Above it stood the seraphim; each one had six wings, &c.* Verse 3, *And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the* LORD *of hosts, the whole earth is full of his glory.* Verse 5, *Then said I, Woe is me, for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, the* LORD *of hosts.* Verse 8, *Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I, send me.* Verse 9, *And he said, Go and tell this people, hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not.* This appearance of *the* LORD, or JEHOVAH, to Isaiah in his glory, is expressly attributed to Christ by the apostle; John xii. 39, 40, 41, *These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him.*

It has been objected indeed, that the word *Lord* in the first and eighth verses, is not *Jehovah* in the Hebrew, but *Adonai;* but it is evident, that the word in the fifth verse is *Jehovah.* When the prophet says, *Mine eyes have seen the King, the* LORD *of hosts,* Jehovah Tzebaoth; the person therefore whom Isaiah saw was Jehovah.

Ezekiel often had the sight of God, or of Jehovah; in *chapters* i. iii. viii. and x. &c. But as it is expressly said in *Ezek.* i. 1, *As I was by the river of Chebar, the heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God;* so whether all these appearances were not purely visionary, may be questioned: However it may not be amiss to transcribe a few expressions of the sacred writer on this subject. *Ezek.* i. 26, &c. *Above the firmament that was over their heads,* of the living creatures, *was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone, and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it—from his loins, upward and downward, as it were the appearance of fire—and the appearance of a rainbow round about. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the* LORD, or Jehovah. *And when I saw it, I fell upon my face, and I heard a voice of one that spake.* Chap. iii. 22, 23, *And the hand of the* LORD *was there upon me, and he said, Arise, go forth into the plain, and I will there talk with thee: Then I arose, and went forth into the plain, and behold, the glory of the* LORD *stood there, as the glory which I saw by the river of Chebar.* Chap. viii. 1, &c. *As I sat in mine house, and the elders of Judah sat before me, the hand of the Lord* GOD *fell there upon me; then I beheld, and lo, a likeness as the appearance of fire from his loins downward and upward, &c. And he put forth the form of a hand, and took me by a lock of mine head, and the Spirit lifted me up between the earth and the heaven, and brought me in the visions of God to Jerusalem—and behold the glory of the God of Israel was there according to the vision that I saw in the plain.* Chap. x. 18, *Then the glory of the* LORD *departed from off the threshold of the house, and stood over the cherubim.* Verse 20, *This is the living creature that I saw under the God of Israel, by the river of Chebar, &c.*

Dan. iii. 25, Nebuchadnezzar, when he had cast the three Jews bound into the fiery furnace, said, *Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt, and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God.* It is not to be supposed here that Nebuchadnezzer knew the Messiah or Christ, who was *the Son of God,* but

he means to express a divine and godlike form,* which, *verse* 28, he calls *the angel of the God of Shadrach, &c.* though probably it might be the peculiar "angel of God's presence, in whom was the name of God," and who is "the only-begotten Son of God."

Daniel had several visions, and in some of them, God appeared to him, or Jesus Christ, in the form of man: Dan. vii. 9, 10, 13, 14, *I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool; his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him; thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him; the judgment was set, and the books were opened.—I saw in the night visions, and behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him; and there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.* Let it be observed here, that I do not number this among the proper and real appearances of Christ or God; for it is called "a dream which Daniel had," and the "visions of his head upon his bed," as *verses* 1, 7, 13, yet it was a dream divinely inspired. Here the *Ancient of days* represents the divine being, or God himself, clothed in light or brightness, white as snow or wool: *One like the Son of man* coming with the clouds of heaven, seems to be the Son of God, or Jesus Christ, who is also the Son of man, ascending in the clouds of heaven, and he came to *the Ancient of days*, that is, to God the Father, and received his dominion, glory, and exaltation at his ascension into heaven in a bright cloud: And it is probable, that from the language of this dream or vision, Christ borrows his name, *the Son of man:* And it is evident that our Saviour's description of his own future appearance as "the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven," *Matt.* xxvi. 64, is borrowed from this vision, and his real ascension to heaven, and his exaltation there, is but an accomplishment of this prophetical scene.

Dan. viii. 15, 16, Daniel had seen a vision just before, and while he was seeking for the meaning of it, *Behold*, said he, *there stood before me as the appearance of a man; and I heard a man's voice—which called and said, Gabriel, make this man to understand the vision.* Surely this man who appeared seems to be Jesus Christ, who had command over Gabriel, one of the chief angels.

Dan. x. 5, *I lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and behold a certain man clothed in linen, whose loins were girded with fine gold, &c.* Here is the description of an appearance very like the appearance of Christ to the apostle John, *Rev.* i. 13; but whether this was the "angel of God's presence," *viz.* Christ, or another angel, is hard to determine. *Verse* 10—14, *Behold, a hand touched me, which set me upon my knees and upon the palms of my hands, and he said unto me, O Daniel, a man greatly beloved—stand upright, for unto thee am I now sent.—Fear not—for from the first day that thou*

* It is sufficiently known to the learned, that in the oriental ways of speaking, almost every thing may be called a father, a son, or a daughter; the "son of pride," for a proud man; the "son of wickedness," for a wicked man; the "sons of the mighty," for mighty men; and the word *God* is also used to aggrandise any idea; the "trees of God," for noble fair trees, &c. so that in Nebuchadnezzar's mouth this phrase, *the Son of God*, can only mean a very glorious person, above the appearance of mankind.

didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words. But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one-and-twenty days: But lo, Michael, one, or the first, *of the chief princes, came to help me, and I remained there with the kings of Persia. Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befal thy people in the latter days.* Verses 20, 21, *Then said he—Now will I return to fight with the prince of Persia:—There is none that holdeth with me in these things, but Michael your prince.* Here it is very probable that *the prince of the kingdom of Persia* is one of those fallen angels, principalities, and powers of darkness, who, by divine permission, governed the heathen nations, and were worshipped amongst them as gods, for the apostle tells the Christians that "the gentiles sacrificed to devils," 1 *Cor.* x. 20, all under Satan their sovereign, who is the *god of this world,* until Christ, at his resurrection and ascension, "spoiled these principalities and powers," and dispossessed them of their dominion, *Col.* ii. 15, and "led them captive," *Psalm* lxviii. 18, and took the heathen world for his possession, and into his own government. It cannot be a good angel, because he withstood the good angel that was sent to Daniel with a divine commission, twenty-one days; and because the angel who was sent to Daniel went afterwards to fight with this prince of Persia.

It is also very probable that *Michael* is Jesus Christ, because he is called *your prince,* that is, the prince of the Jews, and *one,* or the first, *of the princes,* that is, the prime archangel.* And in *Dan.* xii. 1, he is called *Michael, the great prince, which standeth for the children of thy people;* that is, the prince or king of the Jews, for such was Jesus Christ under the ancient dispensation; this was the known character of the Messiah among the Jews; and as king of the Jews he was sent into this world, then *he came unto his own, but his own received him not,* John i. 11.

What confirms this sentiment, is that in *Rev.* xii. 7, when *there was war in heaven, Michael and his angels fought against the dragon and his angels.* Christ as the head of the good angels, and Satan as the head of the evil angels, maintained a war in heaven, that is, in the church, until *the great dragon was cast out* of the church, *that old serpent called the Devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world,* verse 9. Then follows, *verse* 13, a loud voice in heaven, that is, the church, saying, *Now is come salvation and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ,* that is, the power of Michael prevailing over the dragon; *for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before God day and night, is cast down,* by the prevalent intercession of Christ pleading for them, and by his dominion over all things which God gave him at his ascension into heaven.

Amos vii. 7, 8, *Behold the* LORD *stood upon a wall made by a plumb-line, with a plumb-line in his hand. And the* LORD, Jehovah, *said unto me, Amos, what seest thou? And I said, A plumb-line. Then said the* LORD, *Behold, I will set a plumb-line in the midst of my people Israel; I will not again pass by them any more.* Here God appears evidently in a human figure to the prophet Amos, and the same human form seems to appear again to Amos, chapter ix. 1, *I saw the* LORD, Jehovah, *standing upon the altar, and he said, Smite the lintel of the door, that the posts may shake.* Verse 2,

* Yet it has been observed, that though some of the fathers, and our later divines, speak of several archangels, the Scripture uses the word but twice, *viz. Jude* 9, and 1 *Thess.* iv. 16, and both times in the singular number. Perhaps this Michael, that is, Christ the king of the Jews, is the only archangel, or prince and head of all angels.

Though they dig into hell, thence shall mine hand take them; though they climb up to heaven, thence will I bring them down. And to make it appear that JEHOVAH is the peculiar name of the great God, he repeats, *verse* 6, what he had before said in chapter v. verse 8, *He that calleth for the waters of the sea, and poureth them out upon the face of the earth, the* LORD, or Jehovah, *is his name.*

In many of the writings of the prophets, it is said, *the Word of the* LORD *came unto them;* very frequently to Ezekiel, and sometimes to Jeremiah, and others; when there is no evidence of any personal appearances to them at that time; though it is not improbable but at some of those seasons our blessed Saviour, who is called the λόγος, or *the Word of God,* might appear to them in a human form, and dictate a divine message. And some think those words of our Saviour, John x. 35, *If he called them gods unto whom the Word of God came,* may have a reference to Christ's own appearance to the prophets, as this glorious person called *the Word.*

I do not remember any places which seem to favour this sentiment so much as these three, *viz.* 1. Gen. xv. 1, *The word of the* LORD *came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram, I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward.* 2. Gen. xxxii. 24, 28, *There wrestled a man with* Jacob, *till the breaking of the day—and he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel:* Concerning which appearance, it is recorded, 1 Kings xviii. 31, *The word of the* LORD *came* to Jacob, *saying, Israel shall be thy name.* And 3. In the beginning of the *Book of Jonah,* chapter i. verses 1, 2, 3, *Now the word of the* LORD *came unto Jonah, the son of Amittai, saying, Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it.—But Jonah arose up to flee unto Tarshish from the presence of the* LORD—*and he found a ship—and went down into it, to go unto Tarshish, from the presence of the* LORD. Now if Jonah had only an inward inspiration and no vision, how could he imagine that he could flee from this inspiration by changing his place? And why should it be expressed that he fled *from the presence of the Lord,* unless God had manifested some visible presence to him?

Yet, on the other hand, when I read, Micah i. 1, *The word of the* LORD, *that came to Micah—which he saw concerning Samaria and Jerusalem;* and when I read also, Amos i. 1, *The words of Amos—which he saw concerning Israel;* I am a little inclined to think that this expression in Jonah might be an Hebrew idiom of speech among the prophets, attributing a sort of visible presence metaphorically to the word or words of God, which came to them by inward inspiration, or perhaps by a voice: Or it may be, the things themselves which they foretold, were represented to their imagination, and on this account, the word or words of God may be represented as visible. But I leave this matter as a point of difficulty not sufficiently determined.

Zech. i. 7, *In the second year of Darius, came the word of the* LORD *unto Zechariah—saying,* verse 8, *I saw by night, and behold, a* MAN *riding upon a red horse, and he stood among the myrtle-trees—and behind him were red horses, speckled and white.* Verse 9, *Then said I, O my lord, what are these? And the angel that talked with me said, I will shew thee what these be.* Verse 10, *And the* MAN *that stood among the myrtle-trees said, These are they whom the* LORD *hath sent to walk to and fro through the earth.* Verse 11, *And they answered the* ANGEL *of the* LORD *that stood among the myrtle-trees, and said, We have walked to and fro through the earth, and behold, all the earth sitteth still, and is at rest.* Verse 12, *Then the angel of the* LORD *answered and said, O* LORD *of hosts, how long wilt thou not have mercy on*

Jerusalem, and on the cities of Judah, against which thou hast had indignation these threescore and ten years? Verse 13, *And the* LORD, that is, Jehovah, *answered the angel that talked with me with good words, and comfortable words.* Verse 14, *So the angel that communed with me, said unto me, Cry thou, saying, Thus saith the* LORD *of hosts, I am jealous for Jerusalem, &c.* Here observe, this *angel of the Lord* which stood among the myrtle-trees, had the form of *a man*, verse 8, and is not called Jehovah: He seems to be our blessed Saviour interceding for Jerusalem, for we do not find common angels introduced as intercessors in Scripture; "there is but one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." And the Lord, or Jehovah, answered him comfortably. Perhaps this answer of the Lord, or Jehovah, was a voice without any figure or appearance. But after all, it is difficult precisely to represent this whole scene, and to adjust every part of these transactions: There seems to us to be some confusion in it, for want of knowing the various ways and methods of God's discovery of himself and his mind to the prophets.

Zech. iii. 1, *And he*, that is, one of the angels whom he spake of, chapter ii. 3, *shewed me Joshua the high-priest standing before the angel of the* LORD, *and Satan standing at his right-hand to resist him:* Verse 2, *And the* LORD, Jehovah, *said unto Satan, the* LORD, Jehovah, *rebuke thee, O Satan, even the* LORD, Jehovah, *that hath chosen Jerusalem, rebuke thee.* Verse 3, *Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel.* Verse 4, *And he answered and spake unto those that stood before him, saying, Take away the filthy garments from him; and unto* Joshua *he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment, &c.* Whether here was an appearance of Jehovah, or whether our Saviour appeared here only as a man or an angel, does not seem plainly determined by the words.

Having thus given a brief abridgment or historical narrative of the several appearances of God to men in the Old Testament, I proceed to make these few observations or remarks upon them, or rather to set forth in one short view the occasional observations which I made as I pass along.

I. It is evident that the great and blessed God appeared several times of old in the form of a bright cloud or flame of fire, and from this cloud or fire proceeded a voice assuming the most glorious and awful names of God, *viz.* the *Lord, Jehovah*, the *God of Abraham, I am that I am, &c.* Whence all that saw and heard it, must naturally infer that the great God dwelt in a most eminent manner and resided in that bright cloud of fire.

II. Sometimes this great and blessed God appeared in the form of a man or an angel. And indeed when the apparition is called *an angel*, in several places it was the real form of *a man*, because at first when the spectator saw it, he took it to be a man indeed: So Abraham saw *three men*, so Jacob, wrestled with *a man*, so Joshua, and Gideon, and Manoah and his wife, thought at first, that they saw and spoke with *a man*, who afterwards appeared to be *an angel of the Lord.* But it is evident that the true God resided or dwelt in this *man* or this *angel*, because sometimes he calls himself *God*, and assumes the highest names and characters of godhead; and sometimes the spectator calls him *Lord* or *Jehovah*, and *God;* and sometimes the sacred historian calls him *Jehovah* and *God:* And there are some instances wherein all these concur; as *Gen.* xxviii. and xxxii. compared with *Hosea* xi. and *Exod.* iii. Now if these things

are a proof that the true God resided in the bright cloud, or the fire, when he spake from thence, it is at least as good a proof that the same great God resided in the angel, to whom the same things are attributed.

III. There are several instances of the appearance of angels, who do not assume to themselves any of the names or characters of God; so that it is evident that it was not the custom of common angels, when sent by the great God to carry messages to men, to assume divine titles, or speak with an air of divine authority in themselves, without the preface of *Thus saith the Lord:* But there was one angel, peculiarly distinguished from the rest, " in whom the name of God was," as *Exod.* xxiii. 20, 21; and who is properly called " the angel of God's presence," *Isaiah* lxiii. 9; and " the presence of God," *Exod.* xxxiii. 14, 15; and *the angel* emphatically, as in *Eccles.* v. 6, and who is very probably the same with the *messenger* or angel *of the covenant*, Mal. iii. 1. And this also was the common opinion of the ancient Jews, as is shewn in a *Dissertation on the Logos.*

It may be further observed also under this head, that since our blessed Saviour, who is *the angel of the covenant*, came in the flesh, there have been many appearances of other angels, *viz.* to the shepherds, to Joseph, to Christ himself, to the disciples, *viz.* to women at the resurrection of Christ, and men at his ascension; to St. Peter, to St. Paul, to St. John, to Cornelius, and perhaps to others; but not one of them ever assumed the names, titles, characters, or worship, belonging to God.

Thence we may confirm this inference, that *the angel* who under the Old Testament assumed divine titles, and accepted religious worship, was that peculiar angel of God's presence in whom God resided, or who was united to the godhead in a peculiar manner, even the pre-existent soul of Christ, who afterward took flesh and blood upon him, and was called *Jesus Christ* on earth.

And therefore, since his incarnation, no angel has ever appeared that durst call himself God, and assume divine titles, or accept of worship; but has rather expressly forbid the worship of him, as *Rev.* xix. 10. and xxii. 10.

IV. It is very plain and obvious to every reader, that one of the most glorious and illustrious apparitions of the great God, even that wherein the seraphs adore him as the " Lord of the whole earth," and who " filled the earth with his glory," and wherein Isaiah calls him, *the King, the Lord of hosts*, is expressly applied to our Lord Jesus Christ in the New Testament, John xii. 41, *These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him.* Now this may be a key to explain the rest, and makes it very probable that Christ was the person who thus often appeared.

V. It is generally agreed by all christian writers, even from the most primitive times, that God, considered under the idea and character of paternity, and in the person of the Father, is always represented as invisible, *whom no man hath seen nor can see:* But Jesus Christ is described as the " image of the invisible God," the " brightness of his Father's glory," *the express image of his person*, he " in whom the Father dwells;" *I am in the Father, and the Father in me.* He is that *Word of God* by whom the great and blessed God manifests himself, and his mind and will, as a man manifests his mind or will by his word: He represents himself one with God the Father, *I and my Father are one.* And St. Paul calls him *God manifest in the flesh.* Now as the prophet Isaiah and the apostle John, compared together, assure us that Christ was the person who appeared in one of these most glorious and illustrious appearances of God under the Old Testament, so there is the most abundant probability, from all these things con-

sidered, that Jesus Christ was that *angel* who generally appeared in ancient times to the patriarchs and to the Jews, assuming the peculiar and incommunicable names of God, and manifesting the invisible God to men.

That expression of St. Paul, 1 *Cor.* x. 9, adds weight to this argument, *Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents.* St. Paul well knew that when God sent his *angel* to lead Israel in the wilderness, he bid them, *Beware of him, provoke him not; he will not pardon your transgressions; for my name is in him:* And the apostle here seems plainly to refer to this same person, this *angel*, even Christ, whom they tempted or provoked, and he did not pardon them, but sent serpents to destroy them; and yet the person who was thus tempted and provoked, is also called *the* LORD *God*, Deut. vi. 16, *Ye shall not tempt the* LORD *your God, as ye tempted him in Massah.*

VI. Thence also I think we may infer, that there is such a peculiar union between the great God and the man Jesus Christ in his angelic, as well as in his incarnate state, as that he is properly represented as God-man in one complex person: He that was the "angel of the presence of God," and "in whom God dwelt," under the ancient dispensations, has now taken flesh and blood upon him, and is *God manifest in the flesh;* he that is *of the seed of David*, was and is *God over all, blessed for ever. Amen.*

To all this let me subjoin some testimonies, both of ancients and moderns, as they are cited by Bishop Bull, in his *Defence of the Nicene Faith*, Sect. I. Chap. I. Sect. 11.

Trypho the Jew, in his *Dialogue with Justin Martyr*, maintains, that there were two present in the appearance made to Moses in the burning bush, *viz.* "God and an angel; that the angel appeared in the flame of fire, and that God in the angel spake with Moses." To which Justin replies, that that may very well be granted according to the christian doctrine. And indeed Trypho's opinion seems to have been generally received and approved amongst the more ancient Jews; for Stephen teaches us, it was an angel who appeared to Moses in the bush, *Acts* vii. 30, and yet that God himself spake these words to Moses, verses 31, 32, 33, *I am the God of thy fathers, the God of Abraham, &c.* compare *Exodus* iii. 2, with verses 4, 5, 6.

Athanasius, *Oratione Quarta contra Arianos:* "He that appeared was an angel, but God spoke in him."

Clemens Alexandrinus: "The Son of God, who led Moses, was an angel, bringing with him the evangelical and principal power of the Word:" A little after he adds, "The *Logos* or Word was an angel:" and he calls the Son of God the "mystical angel."

Austin, *contra Maxim*, Libro III. says, "I ask who appeared to Moses in the fire? The Scripture itself declares it was an angel appeared; but that God was in that angel, who can doubt?"

Gregory, in his *Preface to Job the Second*, says, "The angel who appeared to Moses is sometimes called an angel, and sometimes God; when he that speaks outwardly is governed by him that is within, he is called *an angel*, to signify his obedience, and *the Lord*, to denote the inspiration."

And Grotius himself, *on Gal.* iii. 19, confesses that "he who gave the law in Sinai

was a singular or special angel, attended by other angels; yet not a mere angel, but one with whom the *Logos* was present." Now it is well known, that by the *Logos*, Grotius means the divine Word or Wisdom.

SECTION II.

THE DIFFICULTIES RELATING TO THIS ACCOUNT OF THE APPEARANCES OF GOD UNDER THE OLD TESTAMENT, RELIEVED AND ADJUSTED.

Objection I. Since the true God appeared and resided in the fiery bush, in the flame on mount Sinai, in the pillar of cloud and fire that conducted the Israelites, and in the bright light that shone sometimes at the door of the tabernacle, and then dwelt on the mercy-seat between the cherubim; the socinians say, Why may not any of these things be called the true God or Jehovah, as well as the angel in whom God dwelt? And especially since God spake out of the midst of this cloud or fire, as well as he spake by the angel, so that all these were representatives, symbols, or tokens of the presence of the true God.

And this objection of the socinians may be further enforced, when we consider, that when this bright cloud moved, God is said to move; where this bright cloud dwelt or rested, God is said to dwell or rest. God himself is said to go before the Israelites in the wilderness when the cloud went before them. God dwelt in the bush when the fire was there. God is said to dwell between the cherubim, *Psalm* lxxx. 1, because the bright light was there. *God is gone up with a shout; the Lord*, that is, Jehovah, *with the sound of a trumpet*, Psalm xlvii. 5, when the ark where God dwelt was carried up to Zion: And upon this occasion David addresses God, Psalm lxviii. 18, *Thou hast ascended on high*, when the ark was carried up to *the hill which God desired to dwell in*, verse 16. What more than this can be said concerning the angel? Or what greater reasons can be given why this angel should be called God rather than the cloud or fire, which also might be called God in a figurative sense, because they were symbols of the divine presence?

Answer. In order to set this matter in a true light, we may consider the following things:

1. Whatsoever be our conception of the distinct personalities in the divine nature, yet the godhead has been generally allowed to be one and the same in all the three persons. If therefore Christ be God, he is the same one God as the Father, that is, he has the same, and not another godhead.

2. Whensoever this great God is said to appear, in Scripture, it is generally attributed to Jesus Christ, or the second person in the sacred Three. This is agreed both by arians and athanasians: And there is this reason for it, that God under the personality of the Father may always maintain the character of the invisible God. The ancients of all parties were united in this sentiment.

3. God frequently manifested himself, or appeared to men, under the Old Testament, in and by a corporeal resemblance, as inhabiting in a cloud, or light, or fire; and sometimes he manifested himself also to men, as residing in or inhabiting a man or an angel, under the Old Testament; for so he appeared to Abraham, to Jacob, &c. Whatsoever created being God resided in, this was called the *shechinah* or

habitation of God. If it was a bright light or fire, it was a corporeal *shechinah*. If it was a man or an angel, it might be called an intellectual *shechinah*, and most probably in a human form.*

4. Whatsoever habitation God assumed, that habitation itself, whether corporeal or intellectual, is not called God merely upon the account that God resided there, unless you include also the divine inhabitant, that is, God himself; so that neither the cloud, nor the bush, nor the fire, nor the man, or angel, are ever represented as God, or called *Jehovah*, without including the idea of that godhead that resided or inhabited in them. So when it is said, *God is gone up with a shout*, Psalm xlvii. it doth not mean merely the ark, which was carried up to Zion, but God dwelling on the ark or the mercy-seat. And in the same manner the gestures, motions, and appearances are ascribed to God, which were visible in that body in which God at that time resided, and which he made the symbol of his presence; but this body is never called God when taken alone, without including the present godhead or almighty Spirit residing there.

5. Hence it will follow, that the words *God*, *Lord*, *Almighty*, *Jehovah*, which are used in Scripture on these occasions, are not sunk into a figurative or diminutive sense on purpose to be applied metaphorically to a cloud, a fire, or an angel, as a resemblance or emblem of the true God, or as a symbol of his presence; but these divine names and titles are preserved in their original and most sublime and divine sense, and applied to God himself, considered in and together with these his habitations or places of residence.

6. It is very probable that the great God never resided, if I may so speak, immediately in any corporeal habitation without the medium of an angelic† or intellectual being, by whom he spoke and acted, and by whom he moved this corporeal habitation as he pleased. We have good reason to suppose that the "angel of God's presence," the "angel of the covenant," the "angel in whom was the name of God," was still the more immediate *shechinah* or residence of God, whether he dwelt mediately in a cloud,

* The Hebrew word *shechinah* signifies *a habitation* or *dwelling;* and it was the name which the ancient Jews gave to that bright cloud or fire wherein God dwelt upon the ark between the cherubim, and in which he often appeared to the patriarchs and to Moses. They also gave the same name of *shechinah* to the glorious Spirit in and by which God acted or manifested himself to men, whether in a visible or invisible manner; that is, whether he came with a cloud of light, or with a voice, or only by silent and secret influences; for they call this *shechinah* by the names of *Memra*, *Logos*, or *the Word of God;* and they not only suppose this *shechinah* to take possession of the tabernacle and the temple, and to reside there in the form of light, but it was a saying amongst them, that "where two or three are met together to read or study the law, the *shechinah* is with them," though in an invisible manner; which is parallel to the words of Christ: *Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them*, Matt. xviii. 20. See Dissertation IV. *On the Logos*, Section III. pages 428—440.

† *Note*, Though in several places I represent Christ in his pre-existent state as an angel, according to Scripture, yet I always suppose this pre-existent soul of Christ to be a proper human spirit, that is, such a spirit as by its own nature is suited to act in vital union with a human animal body. These things are proved at large in the last of these Discourses. The reason why he is called an angel, is partly because he was then an unbodied spirit, and lived as angels do, not united to an animal body; and partly because he was sent as the Father's *messenger*, which is the meaning of the word angel in the original languages, Greek and Hebrew.

Note further, That this does not at all hinder the human soul of Christ from having intellectual capacities and powers vastly superior to any other human soul, or to any angel in heaven, even as the capacities and intellectual powers of one man are vastly superior to another, as the soul of Milton or Sir Isaac Newton to an ideot; and especially while we consider this human soul as constantly inhabited by, and personally united to the eternal godhead, we have abundant reason to suppose his human faculties superior to those of any other creature.

or light, or fire, or a human shape. And on this account, in the narration of the same transaction, it is expressed sometimes that "the angel of the Lord appeared," and sometimes "the Lord God himself appeared," for instance, to Moses in the bush, to Abraham, &c. The names *God*, or *the Lord*, or *the angel*, are used promiscuously in these narratives.

Thus it was not properly the cloud, light, or fire, but the angel, who was intimately and immediately united to godhead; and it was this angel who assumed the names, titles, and characters of *God*, *Lord*, and *Jehovah;* for we may reasonably suppose that the union between God and this glorious angel, that is, the pre-existent soul of Jesus Christ in its non-incarnate or angelic state, was incomparably more near and intimate than the union of the great God with a pillar of cloud or fire: And upon this account the angel may be called God in a more proper manner than the fire, cloud, or bush, could ever be, because of the intimacy of the union which made God and this angel one complex person.

7. None of the corporeal appearances, or habitations of God, *viz.* the cloud, the light, the fire, are said in Scripture to speak to man, it is only said, that God spake out of them. The cloud, the fire, the bush, are never said to assume these names or titles, *I am the Lord, I am God Almighty, I am the God of Israel.* But now the angel who appeared speaks to men, and he assumes these divine names and titles in the Old Testament, as is abundantly evident in *Exod.* iii. and in other places; and so doth Jesus Christ in the New Testament; *Rev.* i. ii. and iii. *I am the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last, &c.* Thence we may justly infer, there was a nearer and more intimate union between the godhead and that angel than between God and the cloud, or fire, &c. even such an union as may be called personal, whereby God and the angel may be looked upon as one complex intelligent agent or person: And thus Christ may be called, as I remember one or more of those learned writers have called him, the God-angel, before he was complete God-man.

8. None of these corporeal appearances or habitations of God, neither the cloud, nor the fire, nor the bright light, are expressly and directly called God by the holy writers in a categorical and express manner. He is *Emmanuel, or God with us:* He is *Jehovah our Righteousness:* He is *God over all, blessed for ever:* Which further shews a more intimate union between the godhead and the man Jesus, than there was between God and the cloud or fire, and it shews also that Christ is a complex person, or God-man.

9. Observe also, that God did not always or constantly dwell in the same corporeal habitation, that is, cloud or fire, but God constantly resided in this "angel of the covenant," this *angel of his presence*, who was his own Son: He kept the same intellectual habitation always, though he frequently changed his corporeal habitation. God who was always united to this unbodied human spirit or angel, did also sometimes assume a cloud, a fire, a bush, or the figure of a man, to appear in, under the Old Testament, but it was only for a season; and these were only so many different præludiums to his future incarnation or dwelling in flesh: So that the angel of God's presence, or human soul of Christ in his angelic state, who was the constant *shechinah* or habitation of the godhead, was one with God, and might be much better called God than the cloud or fire, which were but occasional habitations.

10. When this glorious angel, the human spirit or soul of Christ, together with his

divine inhabitant the indwelling godhead, descended from his angelic state, and was made actual *partaker of flesh and blood;* he was then made *a little lower than the angels,* Heb. ii. 9, he took human flesh into a constant partnership of his person, and became a man. "The Word, who was God, was made flesh," *John* i. 1, 14. This never was said, nor could it ever properly be said, concerning the cloud or the fire. When *God was manifest in the flesh,* this flesh was united into one person with the angel, and became the human or bodily *shechinah,* or constant habitation of God. "In him dwelt all the fulness of the godhead bodily," *Col.* ii. 9. Then Jesus Christ, who was in all former ages the God-angel in a proper and complete sense, became God-man.

Though the cloud or the fire could not properly be called God, because they were not thus united into one person with God, nor in the angel in whom God dwelt, yet the man Jesus, as united in a personal manner to the divine nature, might properly be called the true God. It could not be said concerning the cloud or fire, that they were assumed to be parts of the person of Christ, but it might be said concerning this angel, that is, the soul of Christ, and concerning his body, they were parts of his complex person: And thus Christ in his complex person hath the names of deity and humanity given him, he that is "of the seed of David after the flesh, is God over all, blessed for evermore. Amen." *Rom.* i. 3. ix. 3, 4, 5.

Objection II. Doth not the apostle to the Hebrews, *chapter* i. *verses* 1, 2, sufficiently intimate, that this angel, by whom God conversed with men, was not his own Son Jesus, when he says, *God, who at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son?* Does not this imply that God did not speak by his Son under the Old Testament?

Answer I. We may answer this difficulty thus: Though the angel who revealed the will of God to the patriarchs and prophets, was really Jesus Christ, the Son of God, yet he then spake by a corporeal medium and by organs, which he assumed for that occasion to form a voice, which medium was not part of his person, or personally united to him; therefore the Son of God did not speak immediately to men by himself, that is, by his own person, but spake by the prophets, and by corporeal shapes, &c. Yet when he assumed flesh and blood actually into a personal union with himself, when he made this flesh a part of his person, and became a complete man by a miraculous conception, then he was more completely the Son of God, both in soul and body, and then as the Son of God he spake immediately by himself, by his own complete person, that is, soul and body, to mankind; or God spake to mankind by the very person of his Son, which was never done in the same manner under the Old Testament.

Nor is this any strange exposition, for the ancient fathers are wont to speak to the same purpose: Justin Martyr speaks thus in his *Apology;* "The Word foretold things to come by the prophets heretofore, but when he was made like unto us, he taught us these things by himself." So Clemens Alexandrinus says, "The Lord was truly the instructor of the ancient people by Moses, but he is the guide of his new people by himself face to face." See Bishop Bull's *Defence of the Nicene Faith,* Section I. Chapter I.

Answer II. But I give yet a further answer to this objection in the following manner, *viz.* Though the angel by whom God spake to the prophets and to the patriarchs was really Jesus Christ, or the Son of God, yet he did not appear at that time under his filial character as God's own Son, but he appeared in his angelic character, or as a

heavenly messenger, which was suited to the pre-existent state of the soul of Christ; whereas, under the New Testament, God speaks to us by his Son Jesus Christ, under the special and known character of his own Son, as being now revealed to have been the only-begotten Son of God in his pre-existent state, *John* i. 14, 18; and as having a more conspicuous or sensible character of his divine sonship added to him, by his being born of a virgin, without an earthly father, by the immediate influence of the Spirit of God, *Luke* i. 35; and was named *the Son of God* on this account; and had also a further claim to this honourable title, *Son of God*, when he was raised from the dead, as St. Paul explains that expression of the Psalmist, *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee*, Psalm ii. 7, compared with *Acts* xiii. 33, and is therefore called by the same apostle *the first-born from the dead*, Col. i. 18. It is plain therefore, that though Christ was the Son of God in his pre-existent state, yet he appeared and acted rather under the character of an angel of old, and not under the character of a Son, till the days of the gospel.

It is the frequent custom of Scripture to speak of things as they appear to men, and not always just as they are in themselves, for this is most suited to the bulk of mankind. Therefore the Scripture speaks of the sun's "rising and going down," and its "rejoicing to run a race," and of the heavens being "fixed upon pillars," &c. which are all modes of expression according to appearance, and not according to the reality of things. So when the angel, who is called God, wrestled with Jacob, it is said, *a man wrestled with him*, because he appeared as a man, Gen. xxxii. 24. So *three men* came to Abraham, *Gen.* xviii. 2, because they appeared as men, though one of them afterward evidently was known to be God, and the other two were angels. And so Christ never appearing to the patriarchs and prophets, and instructing them, under the character of the Son of God, in the Old Testament; and being much unknown to the world under that name, it was no wonder that the apostle should represent God as beginning to speak to us by his Son under the New Testament:* This method of solving the difficulty will have a happy influence also to remove the following objection.

Objection III. Though this angel spake oftentimes in the name of God under the Old Testament, though he assumed the glorious titles of God, and spoke words which must properly belong to God, yet it does not follow, that this angel was the true God, or that there was any such personal union between the divine nature and this angel; because there are other instances wherein the titles and names of God are assumed, and words proper to God are spoken, wherein it is very evident from Scripture that God was not the speaker. Consider what the Scripture declares concerning the giving of the law at mount Sinai: It is expressly said, Exod. xx. 1, 2, *And God spake all these words, saying, I am the* Lord *thy God, &c.* Yet St. Stephen tells them, *Acts* vii. 53, they *received the law by the disposition of angels.* And St. Paul, *Gal.* iii. 19, says, the law was *ordained by angels in the hand of a Mediator.* And *Heb.* ii. 2, 3, it is expressly called, *the word spoken by angels*, and distinguished from the word spoken by Christ: *If the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation, which*

* The arians themselves, in their scheme, seem to be as much puzzled with this difficulty, how to suppose that Christ as an angel gave the law, and yet that God spake not by his Son till under the gospel: And some of them are forced to accept of this sort of solution. See *Modest Plea*, Part I. So that they have no reason to object it against us.

first began to be spoken by the Lord? Now if the words at the giving of the law were spoken either by the person of the Father, or by the person of the Son of God, then the apostle's argument is lost, since it is built upon this supposition, that the gospel is published by a person superior to him or them who published the law. But the apostle's argument is certainly strong, and thence it will follow, that the angel who spoke the law was neither God himself, nor Jesus Christ, and yet he assumes divine language, *I am the* LORD *thy God, &c.*

Answer. It was not only the sense of all the ancient writers, the most primitive fathers of the christian church, but it is allowed by most of the arians themselves who make this objection, that Christ himself was present at Sinai, and was employed in giving the law; *Psalm* lxviii. 17, *The* LORD *is among them as in Sinai,* even he who *ascended on high,* and *led captivity captive;* Ephes. iv. 8. Now the law may still be said to be given, declared, or published, by angels, who attended by thousands as ministering spirits on the Lord Christ; and yet the words might be spoken by Christ himself, the great God-man, or God-angel, or the angel in whom God dwelt, at the head of them: For he appeared there, not as *the Son of God,* for he was then utterly unknown under that filial name or character, but he appeared in his angelic character as the great, the peculiar, the extraordinary *angel* or messenger *of the covenant,* the *angel of God's presence, the angel who spake to Moses in mount Sinai;* Acts vii. 38; and spake to the people also, as the angel in whom God dwelt, or, which is much the same, as the great God dwelling in the angel.

Now in the New Testament, when this glorious person appeared amongst men as the Son of God, when he was discovered to be so in his body by his extraordinary conception, *Luke* i. 35; when he was further made the Son of God by his being begotten from the dead, as St. Paul explains David, *Acts* xiii. 33. Col. i. 18; and declared *with power to be the Son of God by his resurrection from the dead,* Rom. i. 4; when he was preached by the apostles as the only-begotten Son of God, both in his incarnate and in his pre-existent state, *John* i. 14, 18; he sustains hereby a superior character to that of an angel, a servant, or mere messenger of God, even that of God's own Son: And *if the word spoken by angels,* or by Christ himself in his angelic state and character, attended by ministering angels, if this word *be stedfast,* and if all transgressions against it were severely punished, *how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation, which—began to be spoken by the Lord?* that is, by the same angel in his character of lordship, since he appeared to be God's own Son, and the heir and Lord of all, not as an angel or messenger, but as sovereign Lord of his church. The very same person may have much greater authority and influence when he sustains a new and superior character.

Perhaps you will say then, Why did not the apostle represent it thus? If Christ was that angel, why does he so apparently distinguish him from the angels who spake the law? I answer, Because though the apostle might know he was the same person, yet the bulk of the people to whom he wrote might not know it, nor understand these distinct characters of the same person, and it would take up too much time and pains to prove that notion to them in that place, nor would it answer any valuable purpose at that time sufficient for such a digression.

That Christ himself was the speaker of the law at mount Sinai, may be further evinced out of Heb. xii. 25, 26, *See that ye refuse not him that speaketh,* that is Christ; *for if they escaped not, who refused him that spake on earth,* that is Moses (for *he that*

despised Moses's law died without mercy) much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven, that is Christ; for it was he who came personally down from heaven, which Moses did not, and it was he who after his death spake by an audible voice to St. Paul from heaven, and by his Spirit to all the apostles. Christ therefore is he that speaketh from heaven.*

Now it follows, verse 26, *Whose voice then shook the earth*, that is the voice of Christ, and not Moses, which shook mount Sinai, which *quaked greatly* when *the* Lord or Jehovah, *descended upon it in the fire*, Exod. xix. 18. And it is the same person who in *Haggai* ii. 6, hath now promised, as the apostle cites him, saying, *Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also the heavens;* and the prophets tell us, this is *the* Lord *of hosts*. The person therefore who spake at mount Sinai, was both Christ and the Lord of hosts.

Thus we see that the author of the *Epistle to the Hebrews*, is so far from denying that Christ spake heretofore in giving the law, that he declares, "it was his voice that shook the earth at mount Sinai;" and by this view of things it appears that we have no need to allow common angels to assume the name, title, and words, of the great God to themselves. And thus the argument stands firm still, whereby we prove that this angel of the covenant, Christ Jesus, is God himself, is intimately and personally united to godhead, and is one with God because he assumes divine names and titles, and speaks the words which can belong only to God.

It might be added also, that it is expressed so often and so strongly by the sacred historian, that "God spake the words of the law," that "the Israelites heard God speaking to them out of the fire," and that it was "the voice of God," that "out of heaven God made them to hear his voice," and that "they might know that Jehovah he is God in heaven above," *Exod.* xx. *Deut.* iv. 10, 12, 33—39, that all things concur to persuade us that the angel who spake the words was also Jehovah, or the God of Israel.

Objection IV. Is there any necessity that we should suppose God himself to be thus personally united to this angel, who appeared under the Old Testament? Is it not sufficient to suppose that a glorious angel might come as a representative and deputy of the great God? And being clothed with divine authority, and representing the sacred majesty of God, might he not assume the incommunicable names and titles and worship of God, as being God's representative or ambassador to the children of men?

And this objection is yet enforced from this consideration, that some persons have pretended, that in the eastern parts such as delivered messages from others, did use to speak in the same manner as those very persons would have done, in whose name they came, for which some have cited one or two historical passages out of the Bible.

Answer. See this sort of objection very well answered by the ingenious Mr. John Hughes, of Ware, in his *Remarks on Dr. Bennet's Discourse on the Trinity*, page 47.

* A great and ingenious writer has very lately, in his *Essay on the various Dispensations of God*, pages 135—141, asserted, that *he who spake on earth*, means not Moses, but Christ himself, in his pre-existent state, under the character of *an angel;* and that he who now *speaks from heaven* is the same person, even Christ under the exalted and superior character of *a Son;* this is very agreeable to the sentiments advanced under the Answers to the Second and Third Objections; and perhaps may be the very truth. But still it is Christ who is that Jehovah who spake in fire, and shook the earth at mount Sinai, and who now speaks from heaven. This that learned author maintains against Mr. Peirce with great evidence, pages 136—144, and against another considerable writer, pages 146—156.

And many other authors, treating on this subject, have given some good solutions to this pretence. The substance of what I have to say at present is chiefly borrowed from others, and shall be disposed under the following heads, whereby I think this difficulty will be effectually removed:

1. The instances which have been brought from the scripture history, of messengers speaking in the name of their principals, without any distinguishing preface, have been happily expounded in another manner by learned critics, so as to cut off all pretences of this kind, and all foundation for this objection, which would be too large to repeat at present. See Mr. Hughes's *Remarks.*

2. Supposing that such a conduct might be customary between man and man in common affairs of life, yet when was it known that the ambassador of an earthly monarch ever took so much upon him, or spoke in this language? What ambassador ever said, "I am the king of France or Spain," or "I am the king of Egypt or of Babylon?" What ambassador did ever receive such honours, as that his master could receive no higher if he were personally present? What prince would ever endure any thing like this to be done by or to his representative? When Rabshakeh was sent with a threatening commission from Sennacherib, he does not himself assume the words of his prince, *Isaiah* xxxvi. 4; for Rabshakeh said, *Thus saith the great king, the king of Assyria, What confidence is this wherein thou trustest?* And again, verse 13, *Hear ye the words of the great king, the king of Assyria:* And again, verse 12, *My master hath sent me to speak these words.* Thus neither in eastern nor western nations do we find ambassadors use the style, and assume the name and honour of their princes to themselves: And who can believe that the only ambassador that calls himself by his master's name, assumes his master's titles and style to himself, and receives the homage that is due to him, should be the ambassador of the great God, the Creator and Lord of the world? But this leads me to the third consideration:

3. If this were ever practised by the ambassadors of earthly princes, yet it would by no means follow, that a messenger from the great and eternal God, the King of heaven, should personate this great God himself in delivering his errands, without any evident hints to distinguish the ambassador from God himself. There is an infinite distance between the great God and a mere creature, even the most excellent creature, and that when it is employed as an ambassador for God. There is some proportion between the highest prince and the lowest of mankind; and therefore though one man may personate another, yet no creature can with safety to God's honour, or to man's duty, personate the great God. There is a much greater danger in mistaking a creature for God, and paying that worship to a creature which is appropriated to God, than there is in mistaking the meanest man for the greatest monarch: One would be a misdemeanor between man and man, the other seems to be plain idolatry, and paying the peculiar honours of God to a creature.

And yet such a mistake seems to be unavoidable, if a creature might thus assume divine names and titles to himself; for it may readily be supposed that God himself might also assume a visible appearance like that of an angel, and by consequence without an express revelation, in such a case, it would be impossible to distinguish the one from the other, that is to know which was God in the form of an angel, and which was the angel personating God. Now in this view of things, religious

worship must have been either neglected to the real Deity, or else must have been paid to an angel. Therefore it seems no way likely that the great God who is all-wise and all-good, should so little consult his own honour or the happiness and duty of mankind, as to indulge such a mistake, or to lay unavoidable foundations for it, and temptations to it.

4. If it were possible in the nature of things, that the great God should depute a creature for his ambassador or representative, and give him a commission to assume divine titles, and to receive divine worship, yet God seems to have declared in his word that he will not do it, for he hath declared himself to be *a jealous God*, jealous of his own name and honour, and to that degree, that he borrows one of his glorious titles from this his jealousy; Exod. xxxiv. 14, *Thou shalt worship no other god; for the* Lord *thy God whose name is* Jealous *is a jealous God.* See *Exod.* xx. 5. *Deut.* iv. 24, and v. 9, and vi. 15. And he is resolved he will not give away his name and glory, nor the glory of his name, to another being; Isaiah xlii. 8, *I am* Jehovah, *that is my name, and my glory will I not give to another.* Mankind, who are led by their senses, are so prone to idolatry, that they have been always very ready to take occasion to idolize and worship any sensible appearances which have looked any thing like divine; and the great God our Creator knows our infirmity, and therefore he hath declared, that he would not give his name and glory to another, especially not to any sensible appearance, lest he should give too strong a temptation to men to practise idol-worship, and pay divine honours to a creature.

5. Mr. Hughes, in his dispute with Doctor Bennet on this subject, page 53, declares that, " after all that flourish the Doctor had made upon this notion of his, that divine angels were wont to personate the deity, he hath not in reality furnished out one single proof thereof; his instances among men being mere oversights, and his instances among the angels are by himself declared to be meant only of Christ, the angel of the covenant, the angel of God's presence; he acknowledges it was Christ who personated the divine majesty at those times, which we do not find (saith he) that any other angel ever did, though so many of them have been employed as the very or true God's ambassadors to men."

6. The ancient Jews would by no means allow of this notion of a mere angel's assuming the names and titles of God. It is plain by the opinion of Trypho, which Justin Martyr relates, that the ancient Jews supposed God himself to be present with this angel; for that they never dared to imagine that a mere angel would call himself the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and would admit such divine honours as Moses, and Abraham, and Joshua paid to him in the name of God. " Such an opinion was too absurd and horrid for them to entertain," as Bishop Bull expresses it; and he adds, " it is a sort of impiety to imagine that angels would ever assume such a dignity, or that God would communicate his incommunicable name to them, or any authority for such a representation of himself, in which a mere creature assumed to himself all those things which belonged to God."

The learned Camero, in his *Annotations on the Hebrews*, chapter ii. verse 2, very well expresses it: " Though lawyers may put on the persons of their clients, yet it was never heard that an ambassador, when he delivers the commands of his prince, ever spoke otherwise than in the third person, 'My prince speaks this.' The prophets give us an

illustrious testimony of this matter, who continually introduce this solemn form, *Thus saith the* Lord. And in visions, angels profess themselves to be sent of God."

Grotius himself confesses, that it " was not a mere angel gave the law in Sinai, but an angel with whom the *Logos* or divine Word was present."

This objection has been indeed carried on further by a late ingenious writer, by way of similitude: " Suppose we hear of king George's speech to the parliament; we know that king George doth not speak it himself, but gives the speech to my lord chancellor, and he reads it: Now if a man upon hearing my lord chancellor speak those words to the parliament, should conclude that he is king George, he would certainly be mistaken:" And therefore though an angel who represents God assumes divine titles, we cannot infer that he is God.

Answer I. It is sufficiently and publicly known that king George gives the speech to my lord chancellor, and that king George himself also is present there, and visible on the throne: And on both these accounts there is no manner of danger of our mistaking the one for the other. But if king George were invisible, or did not appear, and my lord chancellor, arrayed in royal robes, assumed the title and used the very words of the king, without any preface or intimation that king George sent him to speak thus, how should any strangers know, unless they were told, that this was not the king himself? And how could the people of Israel know, that it was not God who spoke the words of the law to them, when the bright array, and the title of God are assumed, and the language is properly the language of God?

But I add, secondly,

Answer II. If the lord chancellor not only spoke words belonging to the king without any such preface, as, " Thus saith the king;" if he not only assumed the proper name and the titles of king George, the king himself being absent or invisible, but if the historians also declared that it was king George that spake these words, if they called it " the voice of king George," and if the spectators called him king, addressed to him as king, and worshipped him as such; would there not be abundant ground for a most pernicious mistake among all those who in after-ages should read this history? Now this is the present case: Jehovah or God himself is invisible, and was not seen by eyes of flesh; and not only the angel who appeared in the Old Testament assumed the divine names and titles of Jehovah or God himself, without any distinguishing preface of, *Thus saith the Lord;* but the sacred historian declares to us it was *God appeared*, and it was *God spake*, it was *the voice of God*, even of Jehovah, *the God of Israel;* and the persons also with whom he conversed, *viz.* Abraham, Moses, and the children of Israel, &c. called him God, and Lord, and worshipped him as such: Now let us put all these things together, and there seems to be an unavoidable occasion given for a very dangerous mistake to all the readers of this history, if God himself, even Jehovah, the God of Israel, did not appear; if the angel who appeared and spake was not so inhabited by God, so united to God, and so intimately one with God, as to lay a foundation for all this representation of things.

All these considerations joined together in this view, appear to me richly sufficient to answer the present objection, and to preclude the notion of a common angel sent in the name of God, and assuming the peculiar titles of godhead. Surely this angel or spirit was God himself, that is, was intimately and personally united to the God of Israel,

and thereby became one complex person in two distinct natures, one common principle of intelligent action, and had a right to those divine titles according to the forms of language in all nations.

Objection V. Though it should be allowed that God was present with this angel, and resided in him, and spake by him, yet is this sufficient to make a personal union between God and the angel? Or is it ground enough to say that God and the angel were one complex person?

Answer. The most common and most familiar idea that we have of a complex person is human nature, or man, who is made up of a soul and body. Let us now consider whether most of those mutual relations or communications between soul and body, which render man a complex person, are not found in this glorious person composed of the great God and this angel.

Has the body of a man a nearer relation to his soul than any other body in the world? So had this angel a nearer relation to God than any other creature whatsoever. Is the soul said to inhabit the body, or reside in it constantly during the whole term of life? So did God constantly reside in this glorious angel. Does the soul influence the body to its chief human actions? So did God influence this angel. Is the body the constant and immediate instrument of the soul, whereby it speaks and acts and conveys its mind to men? Such was this angel to the great God, who dwelt in him. Is the body obedient to the volitions of the indwelling soul? Much more is this angel to the indwelling God. Is the soul immediately conscious of many of the motions of the body? Much more is God immediately conscious of every motion, action, and occurrence that relates to this angel. Are the properties and actions of the body sometimes attributed to the soul, and the properties and actions of the soul sometimes to the body, in the common language of men? So in the language of Scripture the names, titles, and properties of the great God are attributed to this angel; the appearances, speeches, voice, words, motions, and actions of this angel are attributed to God. And if man upon these accounts be called a complex person, made up of soul and body, for the same reason we may suppose that the great God and this angel of his presence make up a complex person also; and this is properly called a personal union.

Objection VI. If it was Christ himself who spake to Moses, *Deut.* xviii. 18, when *the* Lord *said, I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee:* If it was Christ himself said, in Exod. xxiii. 20, 21, *Behold, I send an angel before thee—beware of him, provoke him not—for my name is in him:* If it was Christ who spake to the prophets, *Behold, saith the* Lord, *I will raise unto David a righteous branch,* Jer. xxiii. 5: And if Christ be this very *prophet,* this *angel,* this *righteous branch,* then it must be interpreted that Christ says, "I will raise up myself a prophet, &c. I will send myself an angel before thee; and I will raise up myself a righteous branch to David;" which seem to be strange sort of interpretations.

Answer. If we consider that throughout all the Old Testament our blessed Saviour is supposed to be a complex person, and if we conceive of him as the soul of Christ in its angelic state united to and inhabited by God himself, it is very easy to suppose this glorious person speaking in the name of the indwelling godhead, which is his superior nature, and foretelling futurities concerning himself in

his inferior nature, and declaring what he should be in his inferior economical character. Or we may suppose the angel in whom godhead dwelt, speaks in the name of God the Father, as the great fountain and author of all; and yet this angel may foretel his own future appearances and transactions as an angel, as a prophet, as a branch of righteousness, as the servant and messenger of God the Father, and the appointed Mediator between God and man. Here is no manner of darkness nor difficulty in these ideas, nor has this interpretation any thing strange or harsh in it.

Objection VII. If this angel who appeared and assumed divine names and titles, were so really and intimately united to the true God, as to become one complex person, and all this were so plain and so evident as you represent it to be, then the jewish church could not but have as clear a knowledge as we have of this doctrine, that the two persons, *viz.* the Father and the Son, were the one true God; and then the knowledge of this article is not the peculiar privilege of Christians.

Answer. I am persuaded that some of the ancient Jews and the patriarchs did believe that this was an angel in whom the great God or Jehovah resided or inhabited in a peculiar manner; particularly when Jacob said, *I have seen God*, when Moses was *afraid to look upon God*, when Abraham *spoke to him* as to the great God; but there were several things wherein their light was deficient and very imperfect if compared with ours.

1. The patriarchs might not know that this "angel, in whom God dwelt," and who was thus united to God, was Christ the Son of God, or the Messiah, the great Mediator between God and men, appointed for the reconciliation and salvation of the world.

2. They might not know whether this union between God and the angel was constant or only occasional. Though they might suppose him to be an angel of superior rank, by his being made such a glorious medium of God's conversing and transacting with men at special seasons, yet they might not know that he was assumed into so constant and everlasting an union, and withal so very near and so very intimate, that this complex person should be called *God over all, blessed for evermore*, and that there should be a constant and mutual communication of properties between the one and the other in speaking or writing of them.

3. The Jews, in the days of the prophets, did not know half so many texts of the Old Testament to belong to Christ as the apostles have taught us.

4. I might add also, that the Jewish writers in later ages by degrees came to obtain a confused notion of God's transacting his affairs with men, and manifesting himself to them, by his *Logos* or Word, which sometimes they interpreted as his own essential Wisdom, or the idea, scheme, degree of all things that was in God; and sometimes they made it to signify a very glorious angel, *the first-born of every creature*, in whom God dwelt, and by whom he transacted his affairs with the children of men. And though they had not the same clear and distinct ideas of these matters as the New Testament reveals to us concerning the union of God and man in one complex person, yet in their writings there appear many hints and intimations of this kind, as I have proved in a *Dissertation on the Logos.*

And indeed I know not any thing besides this supposition that can give so fair and reasonable an account how it comes to pass that both the gentiles and Jews,

in the first age of Christianity, did not raise perpetual objections against the doctrine of Christ's deity, that is, his being sometimes represented under the characters and names of the true God; and why they did not always quarrel with the apostles for citing such texts of Scripture as plainly refer to the true and essential God in the Old Testament, and apply them to Christ in the New Testament; as in *Rom.* x. *Ephes.* iv. *Heb.* i. &c. But this supposition gives a very fair solution of it, *viz.* that as God appeared and resided in an angel heretofore, so Christ or the Messiah was understood to be a glorious person or spirit incarnate, who was especially inhabited by God, or in whom godhead dwelt in a peculiar manner, and in and by whom God was to reveal himself to men in the latter times.*

As it was by degrees that the apostles preached up the peculiar presence and union of God with the man Jesus Christ, and afterward came to call Christ God more freely, and applied divine characters and descriptions to him, cited out of the Old Testament; so it was by degrees that the Jews and gentiles received the doctrine of a peculiar union of godhead to the man Jesus, learned the idea of such a complex person as *God with us*, as *God manifest in the flesh*, and that he who was *of the seed of David* after the flesh, was also *God over all, blessed for ever.*

APPENDIX TO THE FIRST DISCOURSE.

SOME OBSERVATIONS ON THE TEXTS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT, APPLIED TO CHRIST BY THE CHRISTIAN FATHERS, AND BY THE JEWS AS WELL AS BY THE SACRED WRITERS.

OBSERVATION I.

WHERESOEVER the writers of the New Testament find the *Almighty God*, the *Creator* and *Lord of all*, the *only true God, Jehovah*, the *God of Israel*, represented in the Old Testament as appearing to men in a visible manner; or wheresoever they find him described as bringing salvation to the Jews, but especially to the gentiles, they seem to make no scruple to cite any of those texts upon a proper occasion, and apply them to our Lord Jesus Christ. Now it is worth our inquiry whether these citations will not prove Christ to be "God incarnate," to be this *Jehovah*, this "God appearing amongst men," and as the "Saviour of mankind, bringing the gentiles into his church?" Let us take notice of a few instances.

Psalm lxviii. 7, 8, "God went forth before his people, and marched through the wilderness, dwelling in the pillar of cloud and fire; the earth shook, the heavens dropped at the presence of God. Sinai itself was moved at the presence of the

* It may not be improper in this place to repeat the paraphrase of one of the targumists, *viz.* Jonathan Ben Uzziel *on Gen.* iv. 1, where Eve said, *I have gotten a man from the* LORD, אית יהוה that is, *a man the* LORD: By which words our mother Eve, in the opinion of many commentators, expressed an apprehension that she had brought forth him who was the Man-God, the promised seed, who should break the serpent's head. The words of the Targum are, "And Adam knew his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, and said, I have obtained a man the angel of the Lord." See Doctor Owen *on the Hebrews*, Vol. I. page 89. So that it was supposed from the beginning of the world that the Messiah was to be a man and an angel, who might be called *God* or *the Lord*, because of God's peculiar indwelling in him.

God of Israel, when he came down upon mount Sinai in fire." *Verses* 16, 17, "God hath desired to dwell in Zion, yea, the Lord, Jehovah, will dwell in it for ever: The Lord is there, even as in Sinai in the holy place; that is, in the visible glory upon the mercy-seat, even as in fire upon mount Sinai. Verse 18, *Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive, and hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also,* that is, probably, for the heathen world, *that the* Lord *God might dwell among them.* This is plainly applied to Christ, Ephes. iv. 8, *When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also decended first into the lower parts of the earth?* which most evidently intends our blessed Saviour.

Psalm xcvii. 1, *The* Lord, Jehovah, *reigneth, let the earth rejoice, let the multitude of isles be glad.* This evidently declares the Lord coming to *bring salvation to the* gentiles, and he is called, verse 5, *the* Lord *of the whole earth;* whereas, *Psalm* xcix. 1, 2, "the Lord who is great in Zion, and who sits between the cherubim," is considered as the God of the Jews; then it is said, *the* Lord *reigneth; let the people,* or gentile nations, *tremble.* Well then, since the ninety-seventh *Psalm* speaks of Jehovah as bringing salvation to the gentiles, it follows, verse 7, *Confounded be all they that serve graven images—worship him, all ye gods.* The idolatry of the gentiles is now to be abolished, and even the angels of God, as well as the princes of the earth, who are called *gods,* are required to worship him. This is directly applied to Christ, and interpreted of him, Heb. i. 6, *Let all the angels of God worship him.* Christ is this Jehovah.

Psalm cii. 15, *The heathen shall fear the name of the* Lord, *and all the kings of the earth thy glory;* and probably the recalling of the Jews follows, verse 16, *When the* Lord *shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory:* Verses 21, 22, "The Lord shall declare his name in Zion, and his praise in Jerusalem, when the people are gathered together, and the kingdoms, that is, of the gentiles, to serve the Lord." Verses 25, 27, *Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of thy hands; they shall perish—but thou art the same, &c.* This is expressly attributed to Christ, *Heb.* i. 10, 11, the apostle introduces it to prove his dignity above angels, and shews that he is the Jehovah, that God who created the heavens and the earth, &c.

Isaiah vi. 1, *I saw the* Lord *sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple, &c.* Verse 5, *Mine eyes have seen the King, the* Lord *of hosts, &c.* which is a narrative of some visible appearance of God. And the holy evangelist interprets it concerning our Saviour, John xii. 41, *These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him.* Here is the great God appearing in a visible manner, and Christ is that God, or Lord of hosts.

Isaiah xxxv. 1, 2, &c. *The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad; the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose.—The glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon;* that is, the gentiles shall have the glory of being a church of God, even as the land of Israel had been; *they shall see the glory of the* Lord, *and the excellency of our God.—Your God will come with a recompence, he will come and save you. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped—the lame man shall leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing; for in the wilderness shall waters break out,*

and streams in the desert, &c. Compare this with Isaiah xxxii. 1, 2, 3, *A king shall reign in righteousness—a man shall be as an hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest—and the eyes of them that see shall not be dim, and the ears of them that hear shall hearken, &c.* The same things are here foretold concerning the appearance of God, and the appearance of *a man*, which plainly refer to the miracles which were wrought when Christ appeared, who is God and man, or God dwelling in man, and it is applied to Christ's appearance on earth, by himself, *Matt.* xi. 4, 5, where he sends word to John, that these evidences attended him, which are the characters of the Messiah, and which were foretold. Now there is no place in the Old Testament more plainly foretels them than the words I have cited.

Isaiah xl. 3, 5, *Prepare ye the way of the* Lord, *make straight in the desert a highway for our God—the glory of the* Lord *shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together.* Here the glory of God is foretold to become visible, and that all flesh shall see his glory. This is plainly applied to Christ, where John the Baptist is said to "prepare the way for the Lord," *Matt.* iii. 3. *Mark* i. 3. *Luke* i. 16, 17, even for the Lord, Jehovah, that all flesh might see him, that is, Jews and gentiles, who include all nations.

I might proceed to the ninth, tenth, and eleventh verses: *Say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God: Behold, the Lord* God *will come—his reward is with him, and his work before him. He shall feed his flock like a shepherd:* Which words seem to refer to Christ, who is *Immanuel, God with us*, whom the cities of Judah did behold, even *God manifest in the flesh*, and becoming visible, who assumes the character of a shepherd, *John* x. and of whom it is said, "Behold, he comes, and his reward is with him," *Rev.* xxii. 12, and who in the next verse calls himself the *Alpha and Omega, &c.*

Isaiah xlv. 21, 22, &c. *There is no God else besides me, a just God and a Saviour. Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else.* Here God is evidently represented as a Saviour of the gentiles: *Unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear: Surely, shall one say, in the* Lord *have I righteousness and strength—in the* Lord *shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory.* Now, that this belongs to Christ eminently appears, 1, Because this prophecy of Christ, as Jehovah our righteousness, is repeated twice by the prophet Jeremiah, *chapter* xxiii. 6, and xxxiii. 16. And the doctrine of Christ as our righteousness is frequently taught us in the New Testament; particularly 1 Cor. i. 30, 31, *Christ—is made unto us—righteousness;* and, 2, It may be remarked that the same inference is made, *viz. that according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord;* and, 3, This same prophecy of the exaltation of Christ, that *every knee should bow* to him, is expressly explained, Rom, xiv. 9, 10, 11, and Philip. ii. 9, 10, and is applied to Christ in both places.

If it should be objected here, that Christ is represented in both those Epistles as exalted to this honour by the Father, upon the account of his sufferings, and therefore it cannot belong to godhead, whose honour is originally and eternally due to the very nature of God; it is granted that the human nature is thus exalted by the Father, as a reward of his death, in *Phil.* ii. and *Rom.* xiv.; it is also granted, that *Christ died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and*

the living: But since the same words are used in both places, and this prophecy of Isaiah is expressly cited, *Rom.* xiv. 11, and applied to Christ; it may primarily signify the eternal glory of the godhead, as united to the *man Jesus,* or *God manifest in the flesh;* and in a secondary sense, it may imply all the share of these honours that the human nature of Christ, which suffered and died, is capable of receiving, by its personal union with the divine, which honour can belong to no other creature, because no other being is thus united to God, or one with God.

Joel ii. 28, 32, *I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, &c.—and whosoever shall call on the name of the* LORD, Jehovah, *shall be delivered; for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance—and in the remnant whom the* LORD *shall call;* which probably means the gentile church. Now this text is expressly interpreted concerning Christ, Rom. x. 12, 13, *There is no difference between the Jew and the Greek; for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him; for whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved;* that is, upon the name of Christ; for this is the very scope of the place, and this the next verse proves: *How shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe on him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?* All which plainly refers to our blessed Saviour.

Observation II. The primitive fathers of the christian church, even the earliest writers, such as Justin Martyr, Irenæus, Clemens Alexandrinus, &c. copy after the sacred writers of the New Testament; and wheresoever they find the *great God,* the *Creator of all, Jehovah,* the *Lord God of Israel,* represented, as becoming a Saviour to men, and especially where he is described as becoming visible either in the ancient dispensations, or under the New Testament, or in the day of judgment, they make no scruple at all to apply these texts to our Lord Jesus Christ. Instances of this kind are very numerous in the writings even of the three first centuries. Justin Martyr affords us several citations to this purpose; and while I have been reading him, as well as Irenæus, I have wondered how it could be denied, that either of them professed Christ to be true God. Justin interprets the following Scriptures with reference to Christ:

Gen. xviii. 1, *And the* LORD *appeared unto* Abraham *in the plains of Mamre.* Chapter xviii. 22, and xix. 27, *Abraham stood before the* LORD. Chapter xxviii. 13, *And behold the* LORD *stood above it, and said, I am the* LORD *God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac.* Chapter xxxi. 13, *I am the God of Bethel, where thou anointedst the pillar.* Exod. iii. 4, 6, *God called unto him out of the midst of the bush—he said, I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.* Chapter vi. 3, *I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of* GOD ALMIGHTY, *but by my name* JEHOVAH *was I not known to them.* Psalm xxiv. 8, 10, *The* LORD *strong and mighty; the* LORD *mighty in battle.—The* LORD *of hosts, he is the King of glory.* In this Psalm God is described as residing in the ark, and ascending to Zion, to dwell there in a visible manner in the bright cloud. The same may be said concerning Psalm xlvii. 5, *God is gone up with a shout, the* LORD *with the sound of a trumpet.* All are interpreted concerning Christ by Justin Martyr.

Irenæus explains many of the same texts in the same manner, and several others,

viz. Gen. iii. 9, "The Lord came to Adam in the evening, and called him, and said, Where art thou? Because in the latter days this very same Word of God comes to call man." Psalm l. 1, *The mighty God, even the* Lord, *hath spoken*, whom Irenæus calls, the *God of gods*. "What God is this? Even he of whom he said, 'God shall come visibly, even our God, and will not be silent.' This is the Son." Psalm lxxvi. 1, *In Judah is God known; his name is great in Israel. Isaiah* lxv. 1, "I was made manifest to them that asked not after me," that is, to the gentiles. Isaiah xxxv. 4, *Behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompence, he will come and save you.* All these places Irenæus applies to Jesus Christ; and a great many others may be found in several of the primitive fathers, some of which are cited by the learned Dr. Waterland in his *First Defence of the Queries concerning the Divinity of Christ*, Query II. page 28, &c. and in Mr. Alexander's *Essay on Irenæus*, Chapter VI.

Objection I. One pretence of the arians against these writers' belief of the divinity of Christ, as expressed in these texts, is, that they suppose Christ in these places is introduced only in the person of the Father, and as his messenger and deputy.

Answer. This pretence Dr. Waterland has sufficiently obviated in the following pages, 33—46, wherein he shews, by some express citations, that the fathers spake of Christ in his own person, though in some places he may be described as the Father's messenger, and as coming in his name.

Objection II. It may be objected further, that however this may be the most plain and most obvious meaning of the primitive fathers in some places of their writings, *viz.* That Christ, or the *Logos*, is Jehovah or the true God, the God of Israel; yet in other places they plainly describe the *Logos* as a derived being, and as having many characters of inferiority, both as to his original, his existence, and his actions; and therefore when those divine titles are ascribed to Christ, they must be interpreted into some inferior or diminutive sense, that they be reconciled to the inferior characters given to that *Logos*, and so may be attributed to an inferior being.

Answer I. Some great divines have attempted to reconcile these inferior characters of the *Logos* to true and eternal godhead, by supposing that both a real derivation and some natural as well as economical inferiority may be allowed to belong to the *Logos*, even in his divine nature. But this I leave to those who can defend the doctrine of a derived God.

Answer II. These inferior characters of the *Logos* may belong to the human soul of Christ, supposing it to be the first of all creatures, and from its earliest existence to be intimately united to eternal godhead: And thus the supreme and divine character may belong to this complex person Jesus Christ, who is both God and a creature; though I cannot say many of the fathers did profess this notion.

Answer III. Whether the different expressions of the fathers in different parts of their writings can be reconciled or no, yet this is plain, that in some places they do in the most evident and obvious manner interpret and ascribe the supreme scriptural titles of *Jehovah, Lord of hosts*, the *God of Israel*, &c. to the *Logos*, or to the Son of God; and this is all that I insist upon here.

Observation III. The ancient Jews, in their interpretations of Scripture, practised the same thing as the apostles and the christian fathers; and where God is repre-

sented in a visible manner conversing with men, or coming to save them, they make no manner of scruple to ascribe these expressions of Scripture to the Word of God, the *Memra* or *Logos*, and sometimes to the Messiah. This may be seen abundantly in several parts of Dr. Allix's *Judgment of the Jewish Church against the Unitarians*, Chapters XIII. XIV. XV. XVIII. XIX. XXVI. And in Doctor Owen's *Exercitations on the Epistle to the Hebrews*, Numbers IX. X. XI.

Now amongst the ancient Jews, the *Memra* or *Logos*, that is, *the Word of God*, often signifies God himself, or something in and of God, some divine principle belonging to the essence of God, whereby he transacts his affairs with creatures; and it also signifies sometimes in their writings a very glorious archangel, or a spirit superior to all angels, "in whom God put his name," and in whom the true God resided in a peculiar manner, as in his house or his habitation, which they called the *shechinah*. This I have shewn at large in my *Dissertation concerning the Logos;* and I have there made it appear how both those ideas may be united in one Messiah. See pages 423—465.

But however that matter stands, yet thus much is evident, that those Scriptures where God is represented in a visible manner, or where he is represented eminently as a Saviour, or "bringing salvation to his people," both Jews and gentiles, have been interpreted concerning Christ or the Word, by the ancient jewish church, by the apostles, and by the primitive christian writers; whence I think we may infer these three things:

1. That Jesus Christ, in the sense of all these writers, has true and eternal godhead belonging to him, as part of his complex person; for the ancient Jews and the primitive Christians, and especially the sacred writers, had such an awful sense of the transcendent excellency of the great God, and of his jealousy for his own name and honour, that they would not dare to attribute his most sublime titles, characters, and glories, to a mere creature, or to any thing which had not true godhead.

2. That the godhead of Christ is the very same with the godhead of the Father; and that his divine nature is the same infinite and eternal being, the same *Jehovah* or *God of Israel*, to whom all the highest titles in the Old Testament are ascribed, as Christ himself says, John x. *I and my Father are one.* The Father and Son are not two infinite spirits, or two gods, but one and the same God.

3. That the denying of these glories and sublime titles of *Jehovah*, the *Lord God*, the *God of Israel*, &c. to belong to Christ, or the interpreting of them into such a diminished and inferior sense as may belong to a mere inferior spirit, a contingent or created being, without any such personal union to godhead, seems to run contrary to the most plain and obvious sense and meaning both of the sacred writers, of the ancient Jews, and the primitive Christians.

DISCOURSE II.

THE

GLORY OF CHRIST AS GOD-MAN DISPLAYED,

BY AN INQUIRY INTO THE EXTENSIVE POWERS OF HIS HUMAN NATURE IN ITS PRESENT GLORIFIED STATE.

SECTION I.

INTRODUCTION.

GOD united to man, and dwelling in a human body, is one of the mysterious glories of our religion. It was so without controversy amongst the primitive Christians, as St. Paul acquaints young Timothy the evangelist, 1 Tim. iii. 16, *Great is the mystery of godliness, God was manifest in the flesh.* The union of the divine and human natures in the complete person of Christ the Mediator, is one of those sublime wonders which could never have been found out by the reason of man, and which were revealed slowly to the church in successive ages. There were types and emblems and glimpses of it in ancient days; but the fuller discovery of this mystery is reserved to adorn the New Testament. In these latter days we have a most evident and certain revelation made to us, that Christ Jesus the Mediator, who was *of the seed of David according to the flesh,* Rom. i. 3, *is God over all, blessed for ever,* Rom. ix. 5.

Yet the glories that spring from this sacred union are too bright to be all unveiled before us in the present state of infirmity. They are too vast and extensive to be received by the narrowness of our apprehensions, while our souls are confined in flesh and blood. The rays of godhead once broke through the human nature of Christ on the mount of transfiguration, but the disciples were not able to bear them. It is by degrees we must gain acquaintance with this divine person; and as his divinity is all light and splendor, so his human nature, which is a creature, has doubtless in itself many peculiar excellencies and prerogatives, that it might be fit to be so nearly allied to godhead with decency and honour. And doubtless also it has acquired most astonishing advancement both in power, capacity, and glory, by this sacred and admirable alliance, as well as by its present exaltation in heaven.

The most necessary and important doctrines of the gospel concerning the person of Christ are plainly written in the Word of God, that the weakest Christians may read and learn them, and be saved. These have been known and acknowledged by all true Christians in all ages of the church. But there are others also of some importance, which are contained in Scripture, and yet may not have been universally received among Christians. Some of these perhaps have not been observed in our reading the Bible hitherto, because our education has given us no hint of them; these may become the subjects of our

delightful search and profitable inquiry, when we meet with the first notices of them in the world. It is our duty to *grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ*, 2 Peter iii. 18, and to seek what further acquaintance with him we may gain by an honest and impartial search into the Word of God. This will carry several advantages with it, *viz.*

1. This will be for the exaltation of Christ himself; for we shall pay him more just honour in every respect, when we know more of him, and are better acquainted with the various excellencies of his sacred person.

2. This will tend to the illustration of the gospel, and the confirmation of our faith; for the whole scheme of Christianity, and particularly all that doctrine that relates to the person of Christ, is so harmoniously connected, that when we gain further light into any one part of it, it sheds some degrees of divine brightness over all the rest.

3. This will better furnish us with answers to the adversaries of our religion; for the more we know, the better we can defend our knowledge, support our profession, and vindicate the name and honour of our blessed Saviour.

4. This will render the Word of God itself more glorious, both in our own esteem, and in the eyes of the world, when we see the darker and more perplexed passages of it unfolded, when we find a way to solve those difficulties, which have often puzzled us and our forefathers, and when we remove those incumbrances which have given our adversaries a handle to assault our faith, and to depreciate the Word of God as a volume of obscure and inconsistent things.

Our Lord Jesus Christ, considered in his complete person, has the divine nature joined to the human; this has been proved with abundant evidence in ancient and modern writings. Now as the divine nature is all over glorious, so there are some glories which are peculiar and proper to his human nature; some of these are native honours and excellencies that belong to the human soul and body of Christ, and there are other surprising powers and dignities which are derived to the man Jesus, partly by his exaltation to the throne in heaven, and partly by virtue of his union with the godhead, as was hinted before.

In many instances, it must be confessed, it is difficult, if not impossible, for us to say exactly how far the human nature is the immediate subject of some sublime honours and actions, and how far they must be ascribed to the indwelling deity; to find the precise limits of the agencies or honours of the two natures in Christ in every respect, is a mystery too deep for our present penetration. Yet since the Scripture has abundantly manifested the exaltation of the *man Jesus* to the right-hand of God, to enjoy inconceivable degrees of power, authority, and splendor, it is proper for us to do so much honour to the man whom God the Father delights to honour, as to read and understand, as far as we can, the peculiar glories of his special advancement.

It has been a common practice with us, because we know that Jesus Christ is true God, and that his human nature is united to the divine; therefore whensoever we read any glorious and sublime attributions to our blessed Redeemer in Scripture, we content ourselves immediately to refer them all to his divine nature, as being all-sufficient to support them; not considering that we may perhaps by this means swallow up and bury some of the most illustrious excellencies and honours of the *man Christ Jesus*, nor suffer his human nature to receive that due share of glory and dignity to which the Father has advanced it. We are sometimes afraid to exalt the man whom the Father has exalted, lest we should be thought to derogate from his godhead. We are afraid to read the

human name of Jesus in some Scriptures which highly exalt the Son of God, lest we should be thought to weaken the force of any of those texts which are usually amassed together to prove the deity of Christ, or lest we should withhold any of them from this service.

I grant that the sacred doctrine of the divinity united to the human nature in Christ, ought to be supported by all just expositions of Scripture. It is an article that we cannot part with out of our religion, without shaking the foundation. But Jesus Christ, our Lord and our God, never requires us to strain one line of his word, or turn it aside from the natural sense, in order to support his deity. There are many passages, both of the Old and New Testament, that declare and confirm this great article; and many of those Scriptures also wherein the human nature of Christ is jointly honoured, do yet carry in them a plain proof of the united godhead. But since there are some Scriptures which in their most natural and obvious sense speak chiefly of the honours of his godhead, and others chiefly describe the exaltation of his humanity, let us do so much justice to our blessed Saviour, as to read the distinct honours of both his natures in those very places of Scripture where he has written them, that so we may pay him the full glory due to his sacred and complex person as God-man.

Nor can it any way lessen the glory of our blessed Mediator, nor derogate from the honour of his divine nature, to shew what capacious powers and sublime dignities are derived to the *man Jesus* either by his present exalted state, or by the influence of that godhead which has assumed him into so near an union, since we still secure to the blessed godhead all its own eminence and infinite superiority to the man.

SECTION II.

SCRIPTURAL PROOFS OF THE EXALTATION OF THE HUMAN NATURE OF CHRIST, AND THE EXTENSIVE CAPACITIES AND POWERS OF HIS SOUL IN HIS GLORIFIED STATE.

That the great and blessed God condescended to assume any human soul and body into a personal union with himself, was a matter of free and sovereign favour; and that he should choose this one human spirit, and this body which was born of the virgin Mary, to be the subjects of this privilege, was the effect of the same goodness and the same sovereignty: "God spake in vision to his holy one, and said, I have exalted one chosen out of the people," *Psalm* lxxxix. 19. It is a favour at first altogether unmerited, and which the *man Jesus* could not claim. "It pleased the Father that in him all the fulness of the godhead should dwell bodily," *Col.* i. 19, and ii. 9. It was a matter of divine good pleasure that God should dwell in that particular spirit, and be manifest in that particular flesh and blood, which was born at Bethlehem.

Thence it will follow, that the influences and privileges derived from this union are limited by the will and pleasure of God; and the honours and powers which accrue to the human nature on this account are suspended or bestowed, increased and diminished, according to the wise counsels and determinations of the divine will.

It seems to be one of the sacred laws of this ineffable union, that the *man Jesus* should have ideas and influences, knowledge and power, communicated to him by the indwelling godhead, in such measures and at such successive seasons as he stood in need of them, for his several offices and operations in the divine economy. The human soul of

Christ cannot receive and retain all possible ideas constantly and simultaneously: This would be to suppose the man really endowed with the properties of godhead. But as fast as the indwelling godhead sees it proper to furnish him with new and larger ideas and powers, so fast is he made capable of receiving and exerting them, both in his state of humiliation and exaltation.

This will appear if we consider that Christ was God-man in the days of his humiliation: He was *Emmanuel*, or *God with us*, Matt. i. 23: He was *God manifest in the flesh*, 1 Tim. iii. 16: He was that *Word* who *was God, made flesh*, John i. 1, 14. And our divines very justly affirm, it was the same godhead which is in the Father that dwelt in Christ: *I am in the Father*, says our Lord, *and the Father in me*, John xiv. 10: *I and the Father are one*, John x. 30. Yet while he lived upon earth, this divine union did not exert its influences to the utmost, neither as to knowledge, or power, or authority; for the child Jesus grew *in wisdom* as well as *stature*, Luke ii. 52; and the day of judgment, which was known to the Father, was unknown to the Son at that time; Mark xiii. 32, *Of that day and that hour knoweth no man, neither the Son, but the Father*. His knowledge was imperfect, and his authority on earth, before his death, appeared rather the authority of a prophet than a king: In his younger years he was subject to the commands of his parents, *Luke* ii. 51; and when he appeared in the world, it was as "a man, sent from God," to reveal his will and to obey or fulfil it. He declared he was no king on earth, that is, a temporal king, for his kingdom was *not of this world*, John xviii. 36. He paid tribute to Cæsar; he would not be the divider of an inheritance among contending brethren, *Luke* xii. 13, 14. He "had not where to lay his head," ix. 58. The *man Jesus* here on earth lived among men, and had not complete knowledge, nor could he have complete power.

It pleased the Father, and it was agreed in the covenant of redemption, that the *man Jesus* should arrive at his exaltation by degrees: It was agreed that he should practise the most profound instances of humility and submission to God, as well as the most astonishing act of pity and charity toward men, in becoming a sacrifice for their sins, and dying upon the cross, before he was to receive his promised honours. The Father thought it proper to bestow the most sublime advancement upon him as a reward of his sufferings; and to suspend his rich reward till his work was done, that he might at once display his own grace, his equity, and his truth, in the glorification of the human nature of his Son Jesus, and that he might be a more proper pattern for all his followers. This doctrine runs through many pages in the Old Testament and in the New.

But when Christ had finished his work, he then prayed for the promised glory. John xvii. 1—5, *Father, glorify thy Son:—I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.* And when he ascended to heaven, and was seated at the right-hand of God, then he that was *of the seed of David*, more eminently appeared to be *God over all, blessed for ever;* as Rom. ix. 4, 5. Then the influences of this sacred union were exerted in a high degree, and honours and dignities were conferred upon him in abundance, with intellectual and operative powers suited to this advancement. "God manifest in the flesh was received up to heaven in glory," 1 *Tim.* iii. 16, and there the human nature lives and acts, shines and reigns, in a manner becoming its high privilege of union to godhead.

In order to pursue my present design, I shall do these two things:

First, I shall endeavour to prove from Scripture that it is the human nature of Christ that was peculiarly exalted after his sufferings; and then,

Secondly, Set before you a more particular detail of the instances wherein this exaltation consists.

First, The reasons to prove that it is the *man Christ* who is exalted by God the Father, are such as these:

1. St. Peter gives us an account in his first sermon, *Acts* ii. 33, of Christ exalted *by the right-hand of God*. If we inquire more particularly of the person who is thus exalted, the context assures us, it is *Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God*, verse 22. It is that very man *of the seed of David, according to the flesh*, who was appointed *to sit on his throne*, verse 30. It was the man that was *taken, and crucified, and slain*, verse 23. The man whom *God raised* from the dead, *verse* 32, who was thus *exalted by the right-hand of God*, verse 33.

2. It is a real exaltation of Christ "by the will or good pleasure of God," which is expressed in many Scriptures, and not merely a manifestative exaltation. It is an advancement to new degrees of knowledge, to a real increase of capacity, to new powers and advantages, which he had not on earth, as well as to new dignities. But the divine nature is eternal and self-sufficient, full in itself of all real and possible powers and dignities, nor can it receive any new powers, nor can it have any real advancement. Godhead cannot be any otherwise exalted, than by having its own original and eternal powers, or the exercise of them, manifested or discovered to his creatures; it must be therefore a creature, even *the man Jesus*, who receives this real advancement.

3. It is the human nature of Christ which is properly exalted, because it is *the man* who is expressly called *the Mediator* in Scripture, whereas he is never expressly called Mediator as God. 1 Tim. ii. 5, *There is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.* Now it was for the most part mediatorial honours and powers which he received at his exaltation; and partly with this design, that he might better fulfil the remaining part of his work as Mediator, that *the man Jesus* might reign over the nations and judge this world. *Acts* xi. 36, 38; xvii. 31.

4. His exaltation is represented as the "reward of his sufferings and labours," in many places of Scripture. Isaiah liii. 10, 12, *Therefore he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he poured out his soul unto death.* Phil. ii. 8, 9, *He humbled himself, and became obedient unto death; wherefore God also hath highly exalted him.* Rev. v. 9, *Thou art worthy to take the book, &c. for thou wast slain and hast redeemed us.* Now it is not so proper to say, the divine nature in Christ, or his indwelling godhead, is rewarded, because his human nature laboured and suffered and died. The godhead in Christ is properly incapable of receiving any rewards from God the Father, for it is one and the same godhead or divine nature in both persons; nor indeed can a God be properly rewarded at all.

This argument will be further enforced, if we consider, that his exaltation after his labours and sufferings, is represented and proposed to us as a pledge and pattern of our exaltation after we have laboured and suffered, on purpose to encourage us

in our labours and sufferings. Now this must be the exaltation of his human nature, or *the man Jesus*, who did both labour and suffer as well as we.

I will say no more in this place, because this doctrine will appear more evident all the way as we proceed: Yet if we had nothing further to say for it, I think upon the whole we might venture to conclude, that as the humiliation of Christ the Mediator has a more peculiar respect to his human nature, so it is the human nature is more especially exalted by the Father, but still considered in union with the divine, and under the character of Mediator.

My second general head of discourse is to give some special instances wherein the exaltation of Christ in his human nature consists; and this appears eminently in the following particulars:

I. The *man Christ Jesus*, united to the divine nature, is admitted to the knowledge of many of the decrees and the secret counsels of God. He that knew not the day of judgment here on earth, has now the scene of all futurities spread open before him; and he communicated them in visions and figures to John the apostle, that he might publish them to the churches. The book of the Revelation begins with this assertion, that "God gave to Jesus Christ the knowledge of things that must shortly come to pass:" And in Rev. v. 5, *The Lion of the tribe of Judah hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof.* Verses 6, 7, The *Lamb, as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God—came and took the book out of the right-hand of him that sat on the throne*, and opened the seals thereof. Here is the human nature of Christ, the Lamb, represented with unknown powers, *viz. seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God:* The seven horns might signify perfect might, and the seven eyes, perfect knowledge; and by virtue of his union to the divine nature this may include his power to send the Spirit of God, or to give forth his gifts or graces. He opens the book of divine counsels, by which the church and the nations are to be governed to the end of the world.

Now the divine nature of Christ knew all that was written in this book while it was sealed; but after the sufferings of Christ on earth, his human nature was admitted to this privilege; and having power given him to rule the world, it was necessary he should know those counsels and decrees of the Father by which the world is to be ruled.

Observe also that he is made and declared "worthy to take this book and to open the seals of it, because he was slain and has redeemed his saints to God by his blood," *verse* 9. Surely it was not the godhead, but the *man Jesus* who was slain; and it is the man, not the godhead, who is become worthy on this account to read this book of divine counsels. This is that *revelation which God gave unto* Jesus Christ, *to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass, and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John;* Rev. i. 1.

II. The human nature of Christ, as united to God, is exalted to the government of heaven and earth. *Matt.* xxviii. 18, Jesus just before his ascension spake unto them, saying, *All power is given unto me, in heaven and in earth.* And *Ephes.* i. 19—22, St. Paul tells us, it was God's *mighty power, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right-hand in heavenly places, far*

above all principality and power, might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in the world to come, and hath put all things under his feet.

I know this sort of expression in Scripture is wont to be applied expressly to the character of Christ as Mediator; for it is usually said, "Though his divine nature, absolutely considered, had all this dominion before, yet as Mediator it was now given to him."

But let us consider these three things:

1. Since the human nature of Christ at least must be allowed in some sense to complete the person of the Mediator, and it is his human nature that is thus raised from the dead by the mighty power of God, and set at the right-hand of God in heavenly places, it is but reasonable to conceive that the human nature receives this exaltation, this power and dominion over all things, though I grant it must be considered in union with the divine: But if we do not suppose it to be the human nature which is thus dignified and endued with authority, then we shall be forced to interpret this text thus, *viz.* that God raised his human nature from the dead, and set his human nature at his own right-hand, that is, on high above the clouds: But has put all things under the feet of his divine nature, considered as Mediator; which seems to be but a shifting and evasive exposition, if the words will admit a sense that is plainer and easier: And no man who reads it with an unbiassed mind would put this strained interpretation upon it.

2. Of what use is the frequent declaration of this power and government conferred upon Christ after his ascension, if it be not conferred on his human nature, and if his human nature does not exercise it? The divine nature of Christ had this power, and exercised this government before: As God he always did, and always will govern the world, though there had not been a word spoken in Scripture of any exaltation of Christ to this government: And since godhead is united to the *man Jesus*, godhead in this united state would continue to govern the world as before, and that even during all the humiliation of Christ: What alteration then does arise from this declared exaltation of Christ, after his labours and sufferings? And besides,

3. What new advantage, what benefit, what gift or reward, can it be to the human nature of Christ, that his divine nature should be made governor of all things? Or that the divine nature should exert that authority, dominion, and power, which it had inherent in itself, originally, necessarily, and without any gift? This government of Christ is frequently represented as a gift and a reward, and therefore must belong eminently to the inferior nature, which alone is capable of rewards and gifts from God.

The same argument may be drawn from Rom. xiv. 9, *To this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived,* or lived again, *that he might be Lord both of the dead and the living.* His death and resurrection belong to his human nature; he died as man, he rose as man, that he might as man rule over the dead and the living; for it is hardly to be supposed that St. Paul could mean, "He died and rose as man, that his godhead might obtain this dominion;" when his godhead had this dominion eternal and unalienable in itself, and needed no such new title to dominion: For his coming into flesh could never divest him of it, nor could his human sufferings repurchase such a divine claim and power, if he had divested himself.

Yet here I would give notice, once for all, that I do not exclude this sort of Scriptures from an economical sense: I mean thus, they may have respect to Christ in his complete person as God-man, and as Mediator, or as a man united to godhead; and they may, and must signify his exaltation in his mediatorial character to these honours and authorities; without the indwelling godhead, several of them seem to be too sublime for a man: But still the most natural, obvious, and primary meaning of them, refers to that human nature, which alone can be the proper subject of real abasement and advancement, which alone could really suffer, and which alone could receive real exaltation; for the divine nature in itself is utterly incapable of either. It is the man who is exalted, even *the man Jesus*, who is called the *Mediator*, but it is the man who is *one with God*. He obeyed and suffered and died as man, but united to God: He rose and was exalted as man, but still united to God. I beg pardon, if I have dwelt too long on this point, or repeated any thing which I had said before. The doctrine itself seems to require it of me, that if possible I might leave no scruple on the minds of pious readers, who are honestly searching out the truth, and would secure the honours of their blessed Redeemer.

It may be inquired here, "What acts can *the man Jesus* put forth in his human nature toward the government of heaven and earth?"

I answer, As he is now let into the counsels and decrees of God, and by his immediate union with the divine nature, he now receives perpetual notice of all the affairs in the upper and lower worlds, so he can give his orders to the millions of attending angels to execute works of judgment and mercy; *they are all ministering spirits* to him. He can manage the affairs of providence by angels as his instruments for the government of the nations, and the good of his saints. And he that has *led captivity captive*, and subdued the prince of darkness with all the armies of hell, into slavery to himself, he can give them permission to exercise their rage amongst mankind under such limitations and restraints as he sees proper: Thus he may govern all things by the angels or devils, as his mediums, or instruments; and he may do it also by himself in a more immediate manner.

Let me ask, may not Christ keep the wheels of nature in their courses, and administer the providential kingdom by virtue derived from the indwelling godhead? May he not exert his dominion amongst all the material elements, and the inhabitants of air, earth, and water, as well as amongst the spirits of the invisible world? Shall prophets, and apostles, and captains, have a resemblance of such power given them on earth, and shall not Jesus the Son of God have the substance and plenitude of it, especially now in heaven? Could a Moses divide the sea with his rod, and turn flints into rivers of water? Could a Joshua say to the sun, "Stand thou still," and forbid the moon to move? Could a Paul make fevers and dropsies depart at his word, and flee at the appearance of his handkerchief? *Acts* xix. 12. Could Peter heal the sick with his shadow passing over them, *Acts* xv. 15; and command Tabitha to arise from the dead? And shall we not suppose the *man Christ Jesus*, in his exalted state, with all the power and glory of indwelling and united godhead; I say, shall we not suppose him able to rule time and nature as he pleases, and to manage all things in heaven and earth, all things mortal and immortal?

Or if we lift our thoughts to the angelic legions, and survey their powers, must we

not suppose the power communicated to our exalted Saviour, to be far superior to theirs? Shall it be within the power of a single angel, when sent with a pestilence, to destroy seventy thousands of Israel in order to punish David's sin, 2 *Sam.* xxiv. 15, 16; or to slay a hundred and fourscore and five thousand Assyrian soldiers in the camp of Sennacherib in one night, 2 *Kings* xix. 35; or shall it be within the reach of Satan's power and commission, as he is the *prince of the powers of the air*, to raise storms and hurricanes, and to send lightning from heaven, *Job* i. 16, 19; and shall not the blessed soul of our exalted Redeemer have more transcendent power than angels or devils? Why should it not be within the reach of his human will, by methods of unknown influence, to govern the winds and the waters, the earthly and the heavenly bodies, to subserve the councils of his Father and his own gracious purposes towards his people?

Or if it should be doubted at present by any of my readers, whether Christ's own human power reaches to an immediate management of all these affairs at so prodigious distances, yet we may be assured, as I hinted before, it is not above the power of human nature, so exalted and so nearly united to God, to give orders of this kind to the standing or fallen angels, which the divine nature has taken care shall be punctually and exactly fulfilled: And thus "he shall reign till he has brought all his enemies under his feet," 1 *Cor.* xv. 24, 25. But a further pursuit of this subject is reserved to the following section.

I proceed now to the third instance of power and dignity to which the human nature of Christ is exalted.

III. "Christ as a man united to God is *exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins*, Acts v. 31." This Scripture must certainly include, and chiefly regard the manhood of Christ, for it is *that same Jesus*, saith St. Peter to the Jews, "whom ye slew and hanged on a tree, that the God of our fathers hath raised up," and exalted to this dignity.

Besides, it is impossible that the divine nature should be really and properly *exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour, &c.* for it would be humiliation, and not exaltation, for the pure divine nature to accept of these titles, and perform these offices, even by way of deputation and vicegerency to the Father, when it had supreme authority originally and eternally in itself, without any donation or deputation.

It will be said here, "What can the *man Jesus* do toward the giving repentance and forgiveness?"

I would humbly inquire whether it were not his human nature that sent forth his apostles when he was here on earth? And is it not the *man Jesus* who sends his ministers abroad into the nations, in his present exaltation in heaven? Is it not still the *man* in whom godhead dwells? Is it not he who gives apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers, to publish this doctrine of repentance and forgiveness in his name? He that *ascended on high* after he had *descended into the lower parts of the earth.* He that *received gifts for men*, Psalm lxviii. 18, and *gave* these *gifts unto men, for the perfecting the saints, for the work of the ministry, and for the edifying of his body*, Ephes. iv. 8—12.

And though we may reasonably suppose the *man Jesus*, considered alone, has not now, nor could ever have, sufficient power in himself, abstracted from deity, to change the hearts of men, make obstinate sinners become penitent, and seal the forgiveness of sins with comfort to their consciences; yet the *man Jesus* may say, "Father, *I will* that this and the other obdurate sinner be reclaimed, softened, and sanctified: Father,

I will that his sins be forgiven him:" And hereupon the blessed Spirit of God works this divine change in the sinner, and seals this forgiveness to the soul. Why may not Jesus work wonders of grace on the souls of men, in the same way as he wrought miracles of healing on their bodies?

I add further, The *man Jesus* may exert a volition that such and such a rebellious sinner be converted, softened, and pardoned; and according to the sacred and unsearchable laws of the union between his divine and human nature, the effect may be wrought and the blessing given by the omnipotence and authority of the indwelling godhead: And in this sense the exalted human nature exerting such a volition, becomes a conscious instrument or agent, in bestowing these divine favours. You will say, perhaps, Was it not so in his state of humiliation as well as now? And what advantage then has Christ exalted? Did not the godhead work the miracle by the intervening act of Christ's human will?

I answer, Yes certainly: But the difference between his agency in his exalted and in his humbled state, seems to be this: While our Redeemer was on earth in his humbled state, he seems to live by more apparent, constant, immediate, and actual addresses to, and dependence on the godhead, for every single miracle he wrought, than perhaps he does now. This dependence was sometimes manifested to the spectators, by praying to his Father when he was to work a miracle, as in raising Lazarus from the dead, *John* xi. 41, he said, *Father, I thank thee, that thou hast heard me*, and yet, then he spake his will with authority, verse 43, *Lazarus, come forth!* At other times this actual dependence was constantly practised, though he did not manifest it to the spectators: So when Christ healed the leper, *Matt.* viii. 1—4, the *man Jesus* said, *I will, be thou clean*, and immediately the miracle was wrought. By the intervening volition of Christ as man, the dead was raised, and the leper was cleansed; but it was *the power of* God *was present* with the will of the man to heal the sick, and to raise the dead, as it is expressed in *Luke* v. 17.

And thus the *man Jesus*, being now exalted to a more sovereign sort of agency, to " quicken whom he will," *John* v. 21, hath a special interest in those titles, *a Prince and a Saviour*, and in bestowing repentance and forgiveness, *Acts* v. 31, 32, because his will is made as it were the agent. He ascended to heaven, he received the promise of the Spirit, he poured down those gifts of the Spirit on his apostles and the primitive Christians, for the ordinary and extraordinary works of grace, *Acts* ii. 33; for it is by his will these things were done.

IV. " The human nature of our Lord Jesus Christ has some influence in the succour and support of tempted Christians. *Heb.* iv. 15, the apostle assures us, " We have an high-priest who was tempted in all points as we are, but without sin; and he can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities;" that is, he has a human sympathy arising from his human sufferings, and therefore we are encouraged to " come to the throne of grace to find help." And chapter ii. verse 18, *In that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.* Now since his ability to succour tempted souls does arise in part from his human sympathy, and from his own experience of sufferings and temptations in his human nature, it leads us naturally to conceive that even his human soul has some hand in the succour of tempted saints.

1. Because the divine nature is not rendered more able to succour them by all the temptations that the human nature sustained. The divine nature is infinitely and

eternally able to succour without any regard at all to the human nature, whether that had been tempted or no.

2. It is the design of this chapter to speak of the human nature, or rather the incarnation of Christ; *verses* 14, 17, he must become like us in *flesh and blood—that he might be a merciful high-priest to make reconciliation*. Now here the human nature is the chief agent, or rather patient, in making atonement and reconciliation, though the dignity and complete merit arise from its union to the divine nature. Then, in the next verse, his human soul having been tempted, is fitted and enabled to succour them that are tempted, by its own sympathy with them, as he was man, but still supposing him united to deity. This is the most natural and necessary sense of the words.

Observe further, that Christ is represented as the head of the church in many Scriptures, and the saints as his members: Now this headship must be referred specially to his human nature, though not excluding the divine, because the members and head must be of the same nature. The second chapter to the *Hebrews* seems to be written with this design, to shew the necessity of Christ's incarnation, in order to sustain the proper and appointed relations to his own people, *viz.* "Because the children were partakers of flesh and blood, therefore he took part of the same, that he might be a brother, a priest, a father, a succourer of the tempted," &c. Nor can any relation seem more nccessarily to require his having a human nature, than that of head and members. Now in what sense can the *man Jesus* bear the relation of such a vital or sympathising head united to his body, the church, if he has no particular knowledge of the wants, sorrows, and sufferings, of his particular members; if he has only a mere general confused knowledge that he has members on earth, who endure sorrow and suffering, though he knows not how many, nor which they be, nor is he able, as *man*, to do any thing for their particular relief? Would it not be strange to say, "He has the most near and intimate relation of headship to his members, as he is man and of the same nature with them, and yet he cannot do any thing for the support or succour of any of them, by the powers of the very nature whereby he sustains this relation, and whereby chiefly he becomes their head? It is granted that the indwelling godhead capacitates him for the supply of the wants of his members, by furnishing him with all grace; but I think that human nature, by which he eminently sustains this relation, and becomes a head, may be allowed to be an intelligent and conscious medium of conveying these supplies.

V. If it should not be allowed that Jesus Christ, as man, can bestow effectual succour and relief on his tempted saints, yet surely he is able to make particular intercession for them. It is upon this account he is declared "able to save to the uttermost those that come to God by him, because he ever lives to make intercession for them," *Heb.* vii. 25. Now we cannot suppose it is the divine nature which properly and directly intercedes or pleads for us in heaven, but the *man Jesus*, who gave us a pattern of that intercession here on earth, *John* xvii.; though it may be the divine nature united that renders this intercession so universally powerful and prevalent.

Nor can we suppose that Christ intercedes merely in general for all his saints, without knowledge of their particular persons, or their present particular circumstances; for this is no more than every Christian on earth does, or should do; we should all intercede or plead in that manner for all the saints, *Ephes.* vi. 18, though our pleadings

have not the same efficacy as his, nor are we supposed to have the same knowledge of their wants.

When we are told that our great High-Priest, whose special work and office in heaven, is to make intercession for us, "is passed into the heavens," and that "he can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, having himself been tempted as we are;" can we ever imagine that this does not refer to the human nature of Christ, since none of these expressions are applicable to his deity? And can we think that the Scripture would represent our encouragements to apply ourselves to him as an intercessor, in such tender and sympathetic language, if he knew only in general that there were thousands of tempted saints on earth, but had no particular knowledge of their persons, their special kinds of temptation, and present distress, which might awaken this sympathy, and engage his special representation of their cases to the Father.

VI. "The human nature of Christ, united to his godhead, is exalted to receive honours from men and angels, in the upper and lower worlds, upon the account of its obedience, sorrows, and sufferings." It is one part of the reward promised to men of piety, that they shall enjoy glory and honour, as well as immortality and peace, *Rom.* ii. 7, 10; and surely our blessed Saviour has at least a right to share in the general promise made to men, and to have his transcendent and perfect piety rewarded with transcendent honours and glories.

Therefore when the apostle had described him as *man*, or the *Son of man*, or the *second Adam*, in *Heb.* ii. 9, he adds, *We see Jesus for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honour:* For these sufferings and his death he voluntarily sustained, as a piece of the most submissive obedience to his heavenly Father, and most amazing charity to mankind; therefore he was entitled to the glorious recompence.

You find these honours paid to him in heaven, according to the Father's promise and appointment. Not only the "saints who were redeemed by the blood of Christ," but the "angels round about the throne," say, with a loud voice, *Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing*, Rev. v. 11, 12; *and every creature in heaven, and on the earth, and in the sea*, join their honours and their blessings *to him that sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever*, verse 13. As the man is assumed into union with the godhead, so the whole person of Christ the Mediator, or God-man, becomes the object of adoration, as our best divines generally agree.

Read what the apostle declares, *Phil.* ii. 8—11, Christ *humbled himself, and became obedient to—the death of the cross: Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.* Surely it is the human nature that seems to be exalted here to this dignity, as it stands united to the divine; and this is manifest, not only because the divine nature could not receive this exaltation, having an original and underived right to worship, but also because his human sufferings are the reason of his exaltation.

I am ready to believe that the human nature of Christ knows and beholds all the knees bowing to him, and hears all the tongues confessing him; or else how can this be a proper recompence for the sufferings of Christ in his human nature? Does the godhead derive recompences from the sufferings of the man? Or can God be said thus

to exalt the pure divine nature to be the object of adoration? Has the human nature of Christ no share in this reward? Or is the human nature of Christ recompensed some other way; that is, by making a luminous figure in heaven, arrayed in bright ornaments above the clouds, or stars, but ignorant of the honours done him by the church on earth, while yet these very honours done him on earth, are declared to be his appointed recompence? How unreasonable and absurd is such a supposition!

It will be objected here indeed, "How can any thing that is not pure God be made any part of the object of religious worship? Is not this contrary to the first command, and to the general law of worship in the Old and New Testament, which directs it to be paid to God only?"

Answer. I think the human nature of Christ is no otherwise capable of religious worship, according to the statutes of heaven, but by being thus gloriously united to the divine: But when it is thus united, the whole complex person may be made the object of religious worship, if God see fit; since the person who is worshipped is really one with God, and has personal communion with the divine nature: But for the further removal of these objections and all the difficulties of this kind, see my *Dissertation of the Worship of Christ as God-man and Mediator*, Dissertation III. Propositions VIII. IX. where I have not only proved it from Scripture, but cited the testimony of some of our greatest writers to support it, such as Turretine and Doctor Owen.

VII. "Christ as man, but in union with God, is constituted judge of the world." This is often repeated in Scripture: *Acts* xvii. 31, God *hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that* MAN *whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.* This is part of St. Paul's sermon to the Athenians: And St. Peter, in his sermon to Cornelius, *Acts* x. 38, &c. says concerning "Jesus of Nazareth, who was anointed with the Holy Ghost, and whom God raised from the dead," *he has commanded us to preach to the people, and to testify that it is he who was ordained of God to be the judge of the quick and the dead.* It is he, even the *man Jesus*, who lived at Nazareth, shall be the judge: It is the *man Christ Jesus*, who "descends from heaven with a shout, and with the sound of a trumpet, shall send his angels, and gather his elect from every quarter of the earth;" he shall call to the dead, and they that are "in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and live; for all judgment is committed to him; *John* v. 25—28; because he is the Son of man," that is, the man the Messiah.

I cannot think that the manhood of Christ would have been so expressly and peculiarly represented under this character and office of the final judge of the world, if the affairs of that awful and solemn day were not committed to him, and if the cognizance of the hearts and actions of men, so far as to decide their eternal states justly, were not communicated to the *man Jesus* by his personal union with the divine nature. Surely he shall not sit upon that tribunal like a glorious or shining cypher, or make a bright inactive figure there! No, by no means: The business of the judgment must "pass through his hands and his head," as Doctor Goodwin expresses it, concerning the government of the world, when he explains that text, *Matt.* xxviii. 18. And when he speaks of the judgment of mankind by Jesus Christ, he speaks more highly and honourably of the influence that the human nature of Christ will have in it, than I dare venture to do here. See Vol. II. Book III. Chapter the last. And indeed I may support the boldest language I use in any part of this discourse, concerning the most

extensive powers of the *man Jesus* in his glorified state, by such a venerable precedent: The authority of that great and excellent man will abundantly excuse and defend me, among all those who have an esteem for his valuable writings.

VIII. It might be added, in the last place, that our blessed Saviour, considered as man, "has some unknown and most extensive ways of communicating his presence, his influence, and his glory, to all the millions of saints in the heavenly world;" for the heaven of each of them consists partly in "being present with Christ," 2 *Cor.* v. 8, and "beholding his glory, which the Father gave him;" that is, the glory of his human nature, or at least as God-man; *John* xiv. 3, and xvii. 24. Now it is but a poor, low, and carnal idea of the heavenly state and blessedness, if we conceive the common rank of saints to have no nearer access to Christ, and no more participation of his presence, or views of his glory, than merely to dwell in the same spacious regions of heaven, and to behold a man afar off, raised on a high throne and arrayed in light, at a great distance. Surely the immediate presence of the *man Christ*, and immediate communion with him, shall be something more near, more intimate, and more blissful, than such a distant sight of him.

Shall it be said, That the powers of every glorified saint shall be vastly enlarged, to take in the blessed prospect and enjoyment, though the object may be afar off? And may it not be said also, with more reason, that the powers of our glorified Saviour shall be much more enlarged to communicate himself and his glories to the meanest and most distant inhabitants of heaven? May he not make himself, even in his human nature as well as his divine, immediately present with them all, by a most extensive diffusion of his human as well as his divine glories?

SECTION III.

A RATIONAL ACCOUNT HOW THE MAN JESUS CHRIST MAY BE VESTED WITH SUCH EXTENSIVE POWERS.

THE great difficulty of receiving this doctrine still lies here: "How is it possible that a human spirit should be endued with powers of so vast an extent?" Can it ever be supposed, that a human soul, a man, should know all things that are done in this earth? That he should be acquainted with the hearts and thoughts of all men? And should take a sufficient cognizance of every minute affair that passes through the hands and the hearts of all human creatures, in order to govern and judge so large a part of the creation?

Answer I. Perhaps it may not be absolutely necessary that every single thought, word, or action, of every particular creature should be known to the human soul of Christ, in order to fulfil his part or province in governing and judging mankind: But all the greater, more general, and more considerable affairs and transactions of nations, churches, and particular persons, may be made known to the *man Jesus*, so far, that in union with the godhead, he may be properly called the governor and the judge, and may execute and fulfil those glorious offices: And if he should not, in an immediate manner, be actually conscious of, or actually influence, the minutest circumstances

and actions of men, yet he may have sufficient powers to know and influence all those greater affairs, in which the lesser and more minute circumstances are also involved.

An earthly king may be properly said to govern and judge his people, who are spread through many large provinces, without the particular knowledge of all the minuter concerns of his subjects; yet if he apply himself with diligence to fulfil his office, he may obtain a particular acquaintance with ten thousand affairs that relate to the various provinces of his dominion; and he may employ proper agents to execute all his orders in the several towns and villages of his government, which his own eyes or his own hands perhaps cannot reach. Now surely we may justly believe that the intellectual powers of our glorified Saviour in heaven, extend vastly beyond the natural or acquired capacities of the greatest prince on earth; it is not impossible but that the *man Jesus* may not only know every saint around him in the heavenly regions, but that every saint and sinner also in this world, with all their biggest turns of life, and concerns of mind, may come within his notice. Did king Cyrus know the face and the name of every soldier in his large army; and shall not Jesus, the King of kings, be supposed to have understanding large enough to take in all the most important affairs of this lower world, and perhaps every person that is under his government, though his knowledge should not reach all lesser circumstances?

Why may not the human soul of Christ be as well appointed to govern the world, as the soul of man is appointed to govern his body, when it is evident that the soul of man does not know one thousandth part of the fine branchings of the muscles and nerves, and the more refined vapour or animal spirits, which are parts of this body? When the soul of man gives order to the grosser limbs to move, all these minute and subtile parts and powers exert their regular operations by an original divine influence and appointment, though the soul has not a particular consciousness of these minute parts of their subtile operations. So our blessed Saviour's humanity may be vested with the proper title and real powers of a governor of the world, without an explicit knowledge of every single atom of it; all which infinite number of atoms may only be under the eye and influence of godhead.

The human soul of Christ is the brightest image or copy of the divine nature that is found among mere creatures; and though it may not receive all the infinite variety of particular ideas of human affairs, which are in the divine mind, yet it may receive as a transcript from the divine mind, so many of the largest and strongest of those ideas which relate to human affairs, as may be sufficient to qualify him for the judge of all, under the immediate influence of indwelling deity. So a man may transcribe a copy of the Hebrew Bible, *viz.* all the letters or consonants of it, sufficient for himself to read and understand it, though he leave out every point, vowel, and accent, which sometimes may be more in number than the letters themselves.

It will be objected further, that every thought, word, and action, of human life may, some way or other, have influence on the particularities of the final judgment, to diversify, enlarge, or diminish, the rewards and punishments of men in the future state; and if Christ, as man, knows not the minutest turns of thought in every heart, he cannot be a sufficient judge, nor award proper recompences to every one according to their works.

I answer, If this be so, yet since the human soul of Christ can do so much as I have mentioned, toward the cognizance and judgment of mankind, he may justly have

this work assigned to him, considering its union to godhead; and where the faculties of the human soul of Christ are exerted to their utmost, and yet fall short, the divine nature which is always present, abundantly supplies all that defect, by a constant, immediate, and unknown monition and influence. "God has ordained a man to judge the world," *Acts* xvii. 31; and yet *God is judge himself. Selah.* Psalm l. 6.

And here let it be observed, once for all, that I can hardly give myself leave to think that any created spirit whatsoever, should know every individual circumstance of every being, and every action, both in the world of bodies and the world of souls. Though Doctor Goodwin supposes the *man Jesus* capable of all this, I rather suppose it belongs only to the omniscience of God himself, to take in with one infinite, simultaneous, and extensive view, all the shapes, sizes, situations, and motions, of every single atom of which this whole globe of earth is composed, with all its animal and vegetable productions, and all the other planetary worlds, the sun, moon, and stars, with every action and circumstance of all their inhabitants. I content myself rather to think it is a prerogative only of God the Creator, the infinite Spirit, to be perfectly acquainted with every motion of the mind, every inward thought and manner of action that belongs to all the innumerable inhabitants of the intellectual world, both men and angels. Should it be granted that any creature could oversee and over-rule every minute affair that relates to the worlds of mind and matter, and every thought and atom that belongs to them all, sometimes I think this would approach so near to the distinguishing properties and prerogatives which God hath assumed and peculiarised to himself in this world, that it would seem to take away that plain and obvious distinction between God and the creature, which ought to be maintained sacred and inviolable. Scripture seems to limit my thoughts about a creature's power in this manner.

Whatsoever therefore I may speak in this treatise according to the most raised apprehensions I have of the "extent of the human intellectual powers of Christ," I can hardly suppose them to reach any further than to take a just cognizance of all those greater and more important motions and actions, circumstances and relations, of the material and immaterial worlds, on which the government of them chiefly depends; and perhaps also, even this may be impossible, without his peculiar union to the divine nature. He may thus have a simultaneous and comprehensive view of all the greater affairs of every inhabitant of the upper and lower worlds, and may also have a successive and particular knowledge of any minuter circumstances that attend them, whenever the indwelling deity sees it necessary to communicate it to him for any special occasions. As the general of an army standing on a hill, surveys the troops engaged in battle, he can distinguish perhaps every regiment, and their changes of ground, when they charge, and when they retreat, but cannot know every sword that is drawn, nor hear every groan; yet some particulars of this kind which relate to the single soldiers may be distinctly told him. Where that great author, Doctor Goodwin, whose opinions I cite at the end of this book, indulges his imagination to fly beyond these limits, I am constrained to leave him, lest I should seem to deify a creature, and intrench upon the supreme majesty of God.

Answer II. To make it appear that our blessed Lord, in his human nature, may possibly be capable of knowing all the most considerable affairs and circumstances of mankind, let us consider how far the mere native capacities of a human spirit may

extend. We must not judge of the innate powers and natural capacities of the soul of the Messiah, by the scanty measures of our own souls and their native powers. The soul of Christ may be reasonably supposed in its own nature to transcend the powers of all other souls, as far as an angel exceeds an ideot, and yet be but a human soul still; for *gradus non mutant speciem*, " different degrees do not change the kind or nature."

When we narrow and limit our conceptions of the extensive powers of the soul of Jesus, and bring them down too near to our own, it is because we have too high a conceit of ourselves, and too low an idea of the great and glorious God. We are ready to fancy the difference between God and ourselves so small, as that a mind so vastly superior to our own, as I have described, must be raised immediately to godhead: Whereas by the view of the powers of angels, which I have hinted before, it is possible there may be endowments and excellencies equal to all the millions of men on earth united in one spirit, which may be yet but a created being, and infinitely inferior to the great God. And surely if there be such a spirit, of such extensive excellencies and endowments, it is divinely proper that this spirit should be the soul of Jesus, who is so intimately united to God, and who " in all things must have the pre-eminence," *Col.* i. 18.

But let us proceed in this argument to raise our inquiries how great and glorious a creature may be formed by the almighty Creator.

If I might venture to speak here in the language of philosophy, it is exceeding hard for us to determine what is the *maximum* or *minimum*, the greatest or the least thing in nature. That matter is infinitely divisible, is a doctrine now universally received and maintained without controversy. Now if we cannot limit the possible smallness of corporeal beings, how can we limit the possible greatness of them? Even in the animal world there are creatures, whose particular limbs escape the nicest microscope, and are perhaps a thousand times less than the smallest visible grain of sand. What amazing difference is between the bulk of these diminutive animals, and the bulk of an elephant or a whale? And yet the almighty Creator may form animals as much superior in bulk to a whale or an elephant, as these huge creatures exceed those invisible mites, when he had formed a world of air, earth, and water, fit for them. And why may not the same God perform the same wonders in the world of spirits? Can he not form a spirit of such extensive capacities as may be equal to a million of common human souls?

Let us think again, what strange difference there is between the life and activity of an eagle and an oyster, or between the greyhound and a snail, and yet both are animals. May not therefore the soul of our Lord Jesus Christ exceed common souls, both in the activity and extent of its powers, as much as the most sprightly animal exceeds the dullest and most stupid? As far as sunbeams exceed smoke and ashes, or as far as the sun exceeds our common fires? " For in all things he must have the pre-eminence," *Col.* i. 18.

Again, Cannot the Maker of all things create a new world of material beings, vastly superior, both in bulk and in powers, to this our earth, and the inhabitants of it? Cannot an architect build a royal palace larger and more exquisitely adorned than his own little model of it? May he not form the model at the proportion of an inch to a thousand yards? And why may not the Creator of all things as much exceed our usual ideas also in forming a spirit of most extensive and surprising capacities above all

other spirits? It is too assuming for us to measure all possibilities by our common conceptions.

But even our common conceptions will furnish us with some examples fit to persuade us of the vast and extensive power of a creature. Could we ever think of the pupil of the eye, that it should take in a whole hemisphere of stars, each of which is bigger than the globe of our earth, if every night's experience did not convince us? And yet this hemisphere, so vast as it is, is but one of the ideas of a human soul. There are millions of ideas besides this, which are contained in the soul or memory of every modern philosopher or ingenious mechanic. Many of these our ideas indeed are successive: But why may not the soul of Christ be large enough in its native capacity to take in all at once what we take in by a long succession, or what would cost us the labour of ages?

Such a glorious created mind as belongs to the Son of God may be capable, for ought we know, of extending its thoughts backward to far distant ages, and forward beyond time, and reach far into eternity, and may also spread them abroad over the nations of mankind, and all their chief affairs, and yet not be perfectly infinite as the knowledge of God is;* for divine knowledge extends at once infinitely backward and forward through both eternities, and reaches to all possibles, as well as to what is actually past and future.

How do we know to what prodigious distances the presence, the consciousness, and agency, of the human soul of Christ may be extended? We are sure this presence is not infinite; but while we suppose it to be short of infinity, what other limits can our reason certainly set to it? How can we tell to what amazing lengths, and heights, and breadths, and depths, his immediate consciousness and immediate agency may reach? Wheresoever Scripture sets limits to a creature's power, let our inquiring thoughts stop short, and lie silent; but reason hardly knows where to stop, while it inquires how powerful and knowing a creature the great God can make.

Surely we have good reason to believe that the soul of Christ is the most intelligent, the most knowing and active creature that God ever made, and has the largest native powers; and it seems divinely agreeable that it should be so, that he might be a proper subject for the favour of a personal union with the godhead, and a proper medium whereby the great God might with honour transact his affairs among the children of men, as well as that he might be a most suitable mirror to display the divine perfections in their fairest and strongest light. Surely there is no created nature which in itself comes nearer to the perfections of God than the *man Christ Jesus*. No creature is a fairer image of God than the soul of Christ is, and thereby it becomes the fittest instrument for an indwelling God to act by, and yet it is infinitely inferior to godhead.

Answer III. But if the native powers of the soul of Christ in its first formation, or during its abode on earth in a humbled estate, were not sufficient for these purposes of government and judgment, yet may they not be sufficient in its present glorified state? The powers of a soul confined in flesh and blood may be but of a narrow extent in com-

* It is worthy of our observation how Mr. Locke, in the *Essay on the Human Understanding*, describes the largeness of a man's or an angel's memory, Book II. Chapter X. Section 9: "It is reported of that prodigy of parts, Monsieur Pascal, that till the decay of his health had impaired his memory, he forgot nothing of what he had done, read, or thought, in any part of his rational age. The several degrees of angels may probably have larger views, and some of them be endowed with capacities able to retain together, and constantly set before them as in one picture, all their past knowledge at once."

parison of those extensive powers which are ascribed to the *man Jesus Christ*, now in heaven. Who knows what "amazing enlargment may attend all the natural powers of man when advanced to a state of glory?" Perhaps a common spirit released from flesh and blood, and exalted to a glorified state, may extend its powers a thousand times further than the greatest spirit dwelling in flesh can do.

And we may suppose also that when this spirit is again united to a glorified body, its own powers of activity, knowledge, and influence, may be yet further enlarged abundantly, rather than confined, by having such a glorious instrument to assist its operations. So a loadstone naked will drawn iron; but when it is armed with steel, it will draw a hundred times as much as before, though the steel without the loadstone has no attractive power at all. Thus may the soul be in a glorified body; and indeed were it not so in some measure, why should the glorified spirits of the saints ever be united to bodies again? The resurrection of the body would be no blessing, if it did not add some new powers and advantages to the saints beyond those of a separate spirit.

Our Saviour, who once dwelt in flesh and blood, is now in a glorified state, united to the most perfect glorified body; and what vast additions may be made to his knowledge and power beyond what he enjoyed in the days of his humiliation and confinement to a mortal body, it is hard for us to determine. When such a capacious soul is united to a glorified body, the extent of its native powers may receive an additional increase beyond what common souls even in glory can ever arrive at, as much as its native excellencies are superior to theirs.

The very extent of the power and presence of a glorified body itself, may be prodigiously large in comparison of our bodies of flesh and blood. A drop of oil may be contained in a pepper-corn, and not extend its influence beyond it: But place this drop on a burning lamp, and the blaze will diffuse its particles of light, when it is thus kindled, perhaps to two miles distance in a dark night; thence it is evident, that these diffusive particles of oil will fill a sphere of four miles diameter: A most amazing enlargement of a single drop! And why may not a glorified body, especially when it shall be called a spiritual body, as much exceed flesh and blood in its extent of powers, as a drop of oil kindled into a blaze stretches itself beyond its own first or native dimensions?

Behold our blessed Lord after his resurrection, even before he was fully glorified, comes with his body twice into the midst of his disciples, *when the doors were shut*;* John xx. 19, 26. Much less doth a glorified body seem to be subject to the present laws, restraints, and limitations of corporeal motion.

What if we should suppose a glorified soul to have as sovereign and immediate an influence over every atom of its own glorified body, as our souls at present have over our grosser limbs? What if it be made capable of ranging and disposing the atoms, of which the body is compounded, in what form it please, and of diffusing them through unknown spaces? Hence would evidently result the safety and immortality of that body, and its prodigious vital activity on the material world. Our safety would be in our own power, and our influence amazing, if we could place every atom of our bodies in what form we choose, and keep it there during our pleasure.

* Whatever other senses may be put upon these words, I think our common translation is the most natural, and the text seems to intimate that it was miraculous.

And then surely we may allow the glorified soul of our blessed Saviour to be possessed of this power in a much superior degree, and to exert it in a far more transcendent manner: And thus *the Sun of Righteousness*, even in the operations of his human nature, may answer all the parallels of this illustrious metaphor.

The natural powers of his body, thus sublimated and refined, may move, for ought we know, as swift as sunbeams, which may travel many thousands of miles in a minute: It may diffuse its influences like the sun in a most extensive sphere: It may reach our world and the moon almost in the same moment, and penetrate earth to the centre.

If the *face* of our Lord, on the mount of transfiguration, *did shine as the sun, and his raiment as the light*, Matt. xvii. 2; if his body appearing to St. Paul was dressed in such a light from heaven as exceeded the brightness of the sun at mid-day, *Acts* xxvi. 13; what diffusive and distant influences may such a glorified body be capable of on the elementary world of air, earth, and water, under the command of such a glorified soul as that of our Saviour?

I cannot deny myself, in this place, the pleasure of publishing to the world a very beautiful resemblance, the first hints and notices whereof I received formerly in conversation from my reverend and worthy friend Mr. Robert Bragge, whereby the person of Christ as God-man in his exalted state may be happily represented. The sun in the heavens is the most glorious of all visible beings: His sovereign influence has a most astonishing extent through all the planetary globes, and bestows light and heat upon all of them. It is the sun that gives life and motion to all the infinite varieties of the animal world in the earth, air, and water: It draws out the vegetable juices from the earth, and covers the surface of it with trees, herbs, and flowers: It is the sun that gives beauty and colour to all the millions of bodies round the globe, and by its pervading power perhaps it forms minerals and metals under the earth. Its happy effects are innumerable; they reach certainly to every thing that has life and motion, or that gives life, support, or pleasure to mankind.

Now suppose God should create a most illustrious spirit, and unite it to the body of the sun, as a human soul is united to a human body: Suppose this spirit had a perceptive power capacious enough to become conscious of every sunbeam, and all the influences and effects of this vast shining globe, both in its light, heat, and motion, even to the remotest region: And suppose at the same time, it was able by an act of its will to send out or withhold every sunbeam as it pleased, and thereby to give light and darkness, life and death, in a sovereign manner, to all the animal inhabitants of this our earth, or even of all the planetary worlds. Such may be the "glorified human soul of our blessed Redeemer united to his glorified body;" and perhaps his knowledge and his power may be as extensive as this similitude represents; especially when we consider this soul and body as personally united to the divine nature, and as one with God.

Now this noble thought may be supported by such considerations as these:

As our souls are conscious of the light, shape, motions, &c. of such distant bodies as the planet Saturn or the fixed stars, because our eyes receive rays from thence; so may not a human soul united to a body as easily be supposed to have a consciousness of any thing, wheresoever it can send out rays or emit either fluids or atoms from its own body? May not the sun, for instance, if a soul were united to it, become thereby so glorious a complex being, as to send out every ray with knowledge, and have a con-

sciousness of every thing wheresoever it sends its direct or reflected rays? And may not the human soul of our Lord Jesus Christ have a consciousness of every thing wheresoever it can send direct or reflected rays from his own shining and glorified body?

To add yet to the wonder, we may suppose, that these rays may be subtile as magnetic beams, which penetrate brass and stone as easily as light doth glass; and at the same time they may be as swift as light, which reaches the most amazing distance of several millions of miles in a minute. By this means, since the light of the sun pervades all secret chambers in our hemisphere at once, and fills all places with direct and reflected beams, if consciousness belonged to all those beams, what a sort of omniscient being would the sun be? I mean omniscient in its own sphere. And why may not the human soul and body of our glorified Saviour be thus furnished with such an amazing extent of knowledge and power, and yet not be truly infinite?

Let us dwell a little longer upon these delightful contemplations.

If a soul had but a full knowledge and command of all the atoms of one solid foot of matter, which according to modern philosophy is infinitely divisible, what strange and astonishing influences would it have over this world of ours? What confusions might it raise in distant nations, sending pestilential steams into a thousand bodies, and destroying armies at once? And it might scatter benign or healing and vital influences to as large a circumference. If our blessed Lord, in the days of his humiliation, could send "virtue out of him to heal a poor diseased woman, who touched the hem of his garment" with a finger, who knows what healing atoms or what killing influences he may send from his dwelling in glory to the remotest distances of our world, to execute his Father's counsels of judgment or mercy? It is not impossible, so far as I can judge, that the soul of Christ in its glorified state may have as much command over our heavens and our earth, and all things contained in them, as our souls in the present state have over our own limbs and muscles to move them at pleasure.

Let us remember that it is now found out, and agreed in the new philosophy of Sir Isaac Newton, that the distances are prodigious to which the powerful influence of the sun reaches in the centre of our planetary system. It is the sun who holds and restrains all the planets in their several orbits, and keeps in those vast bodies of Jupiter and Saturn in their constant revolutions; one at the distance of 424 millions, and the other at the distance of 777 millions of miles; besides all the other influences it has upon every thing that may live and grow in those planetary worlds.

It is the sun who reduces the long wanderings of the comets back again near to himself from distances more immensely great than those of Saturn and Jupiter: And why may not the human nature of our Lord Jesus Christ, both in soul and body, have a dominion given him by the Father, larger than the sun in the firmament? Why may not the Son of God be endued with an immediate consciousness and agency to a far greater distance?

Thus if we conceive of the human soul of Christ, either in the amazing extent of its own native powers or in the additional acquirements of a glorified state, we see reason to believe that its capacities are far above our old usual conceptions, and may be raised and exalted to a degree of knowledge, power, and glory suitable and equal to his operations and offices, so far as they are attributed to his human nature in the word of God? But I proceed further.

Answer IV. But if the soul of Christ, considered singly in its native powers, or

even in its glorified state, be not capable of such extensive knowledge and influence, yet considered in its personal union with the divine nature, its capacities must be enlarged to an unknown degree. And though it is my judgment, that, abstracted from his godhead, the *man Jesus* could not fulfil and sustain all the sacred offices and honours of the Messiah, yet united to his divine nature he may thereby become in a sense sufficient for all this work.

It may be inquired here, what influence this personal union with the godhead can have upon a human mind, to enlarge its knowledge and intellectual faculties and its effective powers to so amazing an extent?

In answer to this, we must all confess that the doctrine of unions is one of the most unknown and unsearchable difficulties in natural philosophy. Our understandings are nonplussed when we consider but the union of the parts of matter among themselves, which no philosophy has ever yet fully accounted for; and much more are we puzzled when we think of the union of matter and mind in every human person, and the strange amazing influences which the one hath upon the other by means of this union. But when we attempt to conceive of the most intimate union, into which the great and blessed God may assume a creature, and join it to himself, our thoughts are lost and overwhelmed with this mystery: And that not only as to the mode or manner of it, which is unsearchable, but as to the extent of the influences and effects of it, which are astonishing, and beyond all our present powers to determine.

Yet since we are thus far assured by the word of God, that there is a glorious union between the man Christ and the divine nature, we may attempt to explain our best conceptions about the effects of it, first as to the communications of knowledge, and then of effective power.

I. "As to the communication of knowledge to the man Christ by his union with the deity." We may try to illustrate this matter by the similitude of the union of a human soul to a body. Suppose a learned philosopher be also a skilful divine, and a great linguist; we may reasonably conclude that there are some millions of words and phrases, if taken together with all the various senses of them, which are deposited in his brain as in a repository, by means of some correspondent traces or signatures; we may suppose also millions of ideas of things, human and divine, treasured up in various traces or signatures in the same brain. Nay, each organ of sense may impress on the brain millions of traces belonging to the particular objects of that sense; especially the two senses of discipline, the eye and the ear: The pictures, the images, the colours, and the sounds, that are reserved in this repository of the brain, by some correspondent impressions or traces are little less than infinite: Now the human soul of the philosopher, by being united to this brain, this well-furnished repository, knows all these names, words, sounds, images, lines, figures, colours, notions, and sensations. It receives all these ideas, and is, as it were, mistress of them all. The very opening of the eye impresses thousands of ideas at once upon such a soul united to a human brain; and what unknown millions of ideas may be impressed on it, or conveyed to it in successive seasons, whensoever she stands in need of them, and that by the means of this union to the brain, is beyond our capacity to think or number.

Let us now conceive the divine mind or wisdom as a repository stored with infinite ideas of things past, present, and future; suppose a created spirit of most extensive

capacity intimately united to this divine mind or wisdom: May it not by this means, by divine appointment, become capable of receiving so many of those ideas, and so much knowledge, as are necessary for the government and the judgment of all nations? And this may be done two ways, *viz.* either by the immediate application of itself, as it were by inquiry, to the divine mind, to which it is thus united, or by the immediate actual influences and impressions which the divine mind may make of these ideas on the human soul, as fast as ever it can stand in need of them for these glorious purposes.

Since a human brain, which is mere matter, and which contains only some strokes and traces and corporeal signatures of ideas, can convey to a human soul united to it, many millions of ideas, as fast as it needs them for any purposes of human life; how much more may the infinite God or divine mind or wisdom, which hath actually all real and possible ideas in it, in the most perfect manner, communicate to a human soul united to this divine wisdom, a far greater number of ideas than a human brain can receive; even as many as the affairs of governing and judging this world may require.

This may be represented and illustrated by another similitude, thus: Suppose there were a spherical looking-glass or mirror, vast as this earth is; on which millions of corporeal objects appeared in miniature on all sides of it impressed or represented there, by a thousand planetary and starry worlds surrounding this vast mirror; suppose a capacious human spirit united to this mirror, as the soul is to the body: What an unknown multitude of ideas would this mirror convey to that human spirit in successive seasons? Or perhaps this spirit might receive all these ideas at once, and be conscious of the millions of things represented all round the mirror. This mirror may represent the deity: The human spirit taking in these ideas successively, or conscious of them all at once, may represent to us the soul of Christ receiving, either in a simultaneous view, or in a successive way, unknown myriads of ideas by its union to godhead; thought it must be owned it can never receive all the ideas which are in the divine mind.

II. Having shewn how the human soul of Christ, by virtue of its union with the divine nature, may be furnished with most amazing treasures of knowledge, I proceed now to inquire how the human nature of Christ may attain vast effective powers, and may be said to have a hand in bringing about the various revolutions of providence, in managing the affairs of the government of the world, and forming the wondrous scenes of the last judgment; and all this by virtue of its union to the divine nature.

Let us consider what power or influence the human nature of Christ might have upon the miracles which he wrought whilst he was here on earth. It is very probable, and almost certain, that it was a part of his divine furniture and commission from the Father, that whensoever he prayed for, and then willed or commanded any such sort of supernatural event, the effect should as certainly follow his volition or his command as the human limbs obey the soul when it wills to move them. The case of the apostles was not so; they had not a personal union with indwelling godhead; they tried once, or perhaps oftener, to cast out devils, and could not do it. But as where our soul wills, our limbs always move at its command, so whensoever Christ the man willed to work a miracle, the supernatural effect followed, if not by human, yet by divine agency. Observe this in a few instances:

When he cleansed the leper, *Matt.* viii. 3, his soul willed that leprosy should depart, and his tongue pronounced these words, *I will; be thou clean;* and immediately the

effect followed, the leper was healed. Whether the human soul of Christ had in that day sufficient knowledge and power given it to change the crasis of the blood, to remove the tainted atoms from the body of the man, and to place all the fibres of the diseased flesh in a proper and healthy form, this may be matter of doubtful inquiry: But if the divine power, united to the manhood, made this sovereign and healing change, and was pleased to make use of the intermediate volition of the human will, and language of the human tongue for this purpose, still the *man Christ Jesus* has his share of agency in this work; and therefore he is said to go about working wonders and healing diseases, *for God was with him*, Acts x. 38.

Again, In the midst of a storm, when he bid the winds be silent, and commanded the waves to be still, it is probable that his human soul and body might not in themselves at that time have direct and proper sufficient influence on the winds and the waves to produce such a miraculous calm and silence; but the divine nature, or indwelling godhead, by its infinite power, suppressed these tumultuous elements at the will and word of Christ, which rebuked the storm: And since *the man Jesus* was made the intelligent medium or instrument of this command, the winds and the seas are said to pay obedience to him; Mark iv. 41, *What manner of man is this, that the wind and the sea obey him?*

It was much the same thing when he cast out devils, and commanded them to depart from the bodies which they possessed. Whether it was the terror of his known character that fell upon them and frighted them, or the compulsive power of his deity drove them out, this may perhaps be doubted. But suppose the demoniacs were dispossessed by divine agency, yet the *man Jesus* has the honour of this miracle, as being the conscious instrument of his godhead therein. It was *Jesus of Nazareth* who healed those who were *oppressed of the devil; for God was with him*, Acts x. 38.

Yet we should take notice that in the days of his humiliation on earth, his power was limited; for he had not the knowledge of all God's counsels, he "knew not the day of judgment," and therefore could not govern the world till his resurrection and ascension, when the Father "delivered all things into his hands," *Matt.* xxviii. 18, and gave him the book of his decrees, *Rev.* v. 7—9. We may observe also that when he raised Lazarus, he prayed to the Father for that miracle, *John* xi. 41, as acknowledging publicly a particular dependence for each miraculous operation; "I know that thou hearest me always, and I thank thee that thou hast now heard me."

But perhaps it is otherwise in his glorified state. Imagine our Saviour in heaven, as having received full and absolute powers over all things, in heaven and earth, *Matt.* xxviii. 18; suppose him now residing in the upper world, and by his own most extensive capacity of mind and by the indwelling deity, suppose him constantly acquainted with the various counsels of God for the government of the world and the church, as particularly as he was acquainted with each single occasion of working a miracle here on earth; suppose also his commission in his exalted state to be so general and extensive, and that according to every emergency, he gives commands to the angels or devils, to earth, air, and seas, to perform such peculiar services for his people, and to bring distress upon his adversaries: Now if all the infinite variety of effects presently appear and answer his command, though really performed by divine power, he may properly be said to have all power, in heaven and in earth, put into his hands, and to govern all things in the upper and lower regions; forasmuch as the indwelling godhead

makes use of the human nature as its glorious and conscious medium, to exert its sovereign authority and divine power; and the *man Jesus* considered in union with godhead gives forth the commands, sees them all executed, and receives the honours and adorations of saints and angels, as their governor and their judge.

Thus if the exalted powers of the *man Jesus* in glory are not conceived to be sufficient in themselves for the complete execution of those great offices to which he is advanced, yet his human soul being united to his godhead, and always under the infallible influence of divine wisdom and counsel, and having such a most extensive acquaintance with the affairs of the upper and lower worlds, the *man Christ* may give forth all the commands of God whereby the world is governed, and "every knee may bow to him, and every tongue confess that Christ is Lord to the glory of the Father," *Phil.* ii. 10, 11.

If any person should inquire here, "May not any of our souls be thus assumed into union with the divine nature, and by this union be made capable of the same powers and dignities?" I answer, By no means; for though the capacity of our souls may be largely extended in a future world, yet I am verily persuaded they can never be dilated or enlarged to the amazing comprehension which the soul of our blessed Saviour possesses. Our souls in their native constitution are vastly inferior to his. As a vessel of clay can never be enlarged by all the art of man, to such a prodigious capacity as a vessel of gold, so nor the soul of an ideot to contain the ideas of a Milton or a Newton; nor any other created spirit to know and do what the blessed soul of Jesus knows and does.

Perhaps the powers of any other human soul would be dissolved and destroyed under such impressions from indwelling godhead as the soul of Christ constantly receives, and by which he is fitted for his high post of mediation and government. Were it possible that the divine power should continually condescend to effect whatsoever a common human soul willed, yet this human soul perhaps has not natural powers sufficiently large to be made a conscious instrument of one thousandth part of what the soul of Jesus knows, and wills, and does by virtue of the indwelling godhead. "In all things he must have the pre-eminence," *Col.* i. 15—18.

Upon this representation of things, the various language of Scripture appears to be true, and is made very intelligible. Christ says, he "can do nothing of himself," he "knew not the day of judgment," when he was here on earth, &c. and yet he is said to "know the hearts of men," and to "know all things;" for as fast as the divine mind united to him was pleased to communicate all these ideas, so fast was his human nature capable of receiving them. "The Father, in succession of seasons, shews the Son all things that himself doth," *John* v. 20. But God had shewn him but some lesser things, comparatively, at the time when Christ spake this; for at that time he assures the Jews, that "the Father would afterwards shew him greater works than these." Thus, as I have shewn before, the union of the human nature to the divinity, being purely arbitrary, or owing to the will of God, the seasons and measures of divine communications made to the man Jesus must be arbitrary also, and limited or enlarged according to divine will and appointment.

Upon this same representation of things also it may be justly said in Scripture, that "God governs the world, God only knows the hearts of all men, and God himself is the Judge, and yet Christ is the searcher of hearts, the Judge and Lord of all;" because though the man Jesus may have these titles and characters attributed to him, yet it is

not merely the man considered abstractly in himself, but it is the man united to God, it is the person of God-man: Or you may say, the divine nature or the godhead acting in and by the man Jesus, who performs all these wonders, and which makes the man Jesus the conscious and intelligent medium of these performances; and thus he gives him the honour of being the agent.

By this account of things, there is a fair answer given to the objection that might be started against the first part of this section, *viz.* "If the human soul of Christ, which is but a creature, may have such a vast and astonishing extent of knowledge and power, does not this represent a creature approaching too near to the idea of God?" Does it not invest a creature with some of those prerogatives which are mentioned in Scripture, as peculiar and appropriate to deity? And does it not thus take away the distinction which God has given between himself and creatures, as well as enervate several of our scripture proofs of the divinity of Christ?

I have, indeed, in some measure anticipated this objection, when I limited the knowledge and power of the *man Jesus*, only to the greater and more important concerns and actions of the material and intellectual worlds, on which the government of them chiefly depends: And even this must be a very amazing and comprehensive knowledge and power for a creature to possess: But every thought, and every motion, and every atom of the worlds of souls and bodies, in my opinion, is known only to God, and belongs to infinite omniscience alone.

But to remove this difficulty and danger yet farther, let us always remember, that the human nature of Christ, which is so exalted, has the fulness of the godhead dwelling in it, or is personally united to deity. Thence it follows, that when these most extensive powers are attributed to the *man Jesus*, it is by virtue of the divine nature that dwells in him: And therefore the complex person of our blessed Saviour may justly have these divine prerogatives of knowledge and power ascribed to him. They being given us to distinguish God from a mere creature, cannot be applied by the word of a true and faithful God to any person who has not godhead in him; and upon this account they continue their assistance to prove the deity of Christ.

If it were possible that a mere creature could be framed by divine power, capable in itself of some of those operations which God has assumed to himself, as his own prerogatives, such as governing and judging the world, searching and sanctifying the hearts of men, &c. yet since the great God, who is jealous of his own honour, has appropriated these characters and operations to himself alone, I think we may be assured that he would never form such a creature with these characters and operations; or at least, that he would never discover such a creature to us in our world, lest he should thereby take away the inviolable criteria or signs which himself has given us to distinguish between God and creatures. Or if ever such a glorious creature were formed and discovered to us, he would certainly be intimately and personally united to the divine nature, and thus have proper godhead dwelling in him, lest we should be unavoidably exposed to the danger of taking one for God who was not God, and paying divine honours to a person who was not divine.

Perhaps while we dwell on earth, there will always remain some difficulty in adjusting several particulars that relate to the person, the offices, and the operations of our blessed Saviour: But since we firmly believe that his name is *Emmanuel*, or *God with us*, and that God and man are united to constitute the complete person of our Mediator;

since we are persuaded also that the characters and offices which he sustains, require powers superior to all created nature for the most complete execution of them; therefore where we are at a loss in determining how far the divine nature operates, and how far the human, in any special part of his offices, we may refer it in general to the complex person of the Mediator as God-man. In this person we are sure there are powers abundantly sufficient to answer all the necessities and demands of every office which he sustains. When we consider him as God, it is as God united to man: When we consider him as man, it is as man united to God; and his person as God-man, our Governor and our Judge demands our adoration, and faith, and love.

To conclude this subject, though such speculations as I have indulged in this Discourse, are by no means necessary to our salvation, yet they may be applied to several excellent purposes in Christianity. They may cure us of our old narrow conceptions of the glories of the exalted human nature of Christ, and raise in us nobler ideas of that illustrious person, whom God the Father hath advanced to so sublime a degree of power and majesty at his own right-hand.

These speculations may give us a much higher esteem of our blessed Saviour, and a more affecting sense of his sorrows and sufferings in the value and dignity of them, when we observe how glorious a person he is in himself, and what a rich and surprising recompence God the Father has made him upon this account. They may teach us to pay more just and agreeable honours to the person of our Redeemer God-man, and excite us to a nobler practice of gratitude, to do and suffer any thing for his sake, who has done and suffered so much for us on earth, and who continues to do so much for us in heaven. Sure it must be a culpable defect in us, willingly to withhold any part of that esteem, affection, and love, from *the man Christ Jesus*, which he has so richly merited at our hands by his amazing condescension, by his former mortal agonies, and by his present extensive benefits. We would not willingly treat any of our fellow-creatures at so low and unworthy a rate, as too often we treat the Son of God, who died for us, and is exalted to the Father's throne; *Rev.* iii. 27, and iv. 21.

"It has pleased the Father that all the fulness of godhead should dwell bodily in the man Jesus," that there should be a personal union between God and man, that so the human nature being a part of the complex person of the Mediator, it might be assumed into the complex object of worship: And indeed if we do not include the human nature of Christ in the honours which we pay him, I think we can be hardly said to give him any of that special honour in a proper sense, to which the Father has advanced him by this union: And we seem to deprive his sacred person also of that peculiar glory which he received from the Father by way of gift or reward for his sufferings. For it is not the divine nature properly, but the human which endured the sufferings, and is entitled to the reward. Whatsoever sublime honours therefore we pay to the pure godhead of Christ, while we have no actual regard to the *man Jesus* who is united to the Deity, we seem to neglect that peculiar honour due to him, for which we have perhaps the most frequent precepts and examples in the New Testament, that is, the honour due to him as God-man and Mediator.

I grant that we must not separate the divine nature of Christ from the human, while we address him with religious worship; for the mere man abstracted from godhead doth not seem a proper object, nor justly capable of it, according to the rules of Scripture: Yet while we direct our devotions to his whole sacred person, our forms of address may

and ought to have frequent respect to the past sorrows and the present glories and powers of his human nature: This is to worship him, according to the patterns of worship paid to him, which stand recorded in Scripture for our imitation. See *Rev.* i. 5, 6, and v. 9, and vii. 9, 10.

All the honour which we pay to the *man Jesus*, must redound to the glory of the indwelling godhead, and to the honour of the Father; yet we should look upon ourselves under special obligations, to pay particular honour and love to whom honour and love are due, and not forget the interest of the human nature of Christ in the smart of his sufferings, and in the glory of his exaltation, when we pay religious worship to our Emmanuel, or God with us. See these things more discoursed at large in my *Third Dissertation on the Trinity*, pages 387—414.

Such raised sentiments as these, concerning the power and dignity of our exalted Redeemer, may discover to us the sense and beauty of several expressions of Scripture, which before were unobserved or unknown; and may make it appear with what propriety the Scripture speaks concerning the rewards and recompences which Christ received, on the account of his sufferings: It discovers also the distinct capacities with which he is furnished to fulfil those glorious offices of government and judgment, that the Father has invested him with.

While we give a sacred freedom to our meditations on this subject, we may feel ourselves inspired with holy breathings toward the upper world, where the person of our great Redeemer dwells at the right-hand of God. Such an elevation of thought may awaken in us yet further degrees of humble and sacred curiosity to arrive at a better acquaintance with the great Theanthropos, or "God in our nature," *whom having not seen we love, and in whom, though now* we *see him not, yet believing* we *rejoice*, 1 Peter i. 8. This should make us long until the time comes, when our doubtful and imperfect guesses at his glory shall vanish; when we shall view him no longer through the darkness of a glass, but *see him as he is*, and behold him *face to face*. Then shall it appear, that eternal life, in our possession of it, as well as in our way to it, consists in the "knowledge of the one true God, and Jesus Christ whom he has sent," *John* xvii. 3. Then shall the Son of God himself, and all his saints together, rejoice in the accomplishment of that glorious language of his intercession, John xvii. 24, *Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me;* and this will be a great part of our heaven. *Amen.*

SECTION IV.

TESTIMONIES FROM OTHER WRITERS.

Since I have finished this discourse, I have met with several authors who were zealous and hearty friends of the doctrine of the deity of Christ, and yet have raised their meditations to a sublime degree concerning the "extensive powers and capacities of his human nature now glorified." Perhaps it will allure some readers into a more favourable sentiment of this doctrine, when they shall find that it is not a loose and wild flight of imagination, but the settled and sedate judgment of former writers of worth and eminency; and for this reason I have made the following citations.

If we were to consult the writings of ancient fathers, Doctor Whitby * assures us, in his *Annotations on Philip.* ii. 9, that " they refer this high exaltation of Christ, not to his divine but human nature; and that the apostle speaks not here of the exaltation of his divine nature by the manifestation of his concealed glory and power, but of the exaltation of that nature, which had suffered: For this is represented in Scripture as the reward of his passion, Heb. ii. 9, *We see* him, *saith* the apostle, *who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour.* And again, the elders about the throne said, *Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches,* &c. Rev. v. 12. Though it was given to *the man Christ Jesus,* because the " fulness of the godhead dwelt in him," *Col.* ii. 9.

He adds also, at *verse* 11, " Seeing the Father thus exalted the humanity of Christ, since he united the *Logos* to the human nature; what hinders that this exaltation should be said to be to the glory of the Father, from whom he received even the divine nature?"

I might cite several other testimonies from Dr. Whitby's *Annotations,* and every learned reader knows that in those *Annotations,* he is zealous upon all occasions to oppose the arian doctrine.

As the fathers suppose this exaltation to the government and judgment of the world to belong to the human nature of Christ, so the school-men are zealous for the communication of such a most extensive knowledge to *the man Christ Jesus,* as renders him capable of these offices; and yet the school-men are well known to be as zealous defenders of the divinity of our blessed Saviour as any Christian writers whatsoever.

The lutherans are as hearty believers that Christ is true God, and that they suppose his human nature to be advanced now in glory to an universal knowledge of all things in heaven and in earth, and that by union with his deity; so that he has a sort of omnipresence and omniscience.

If you consult the remonstrant divines, they have the same opinion of the matter; see Limborch's *Theology,* in Latin, Book V. Chapter XVIII. " Though we have excluded all creatures from being the object of divine worship, yet this must not exclude our Lord Jesus Christ the Mediator; for though as he is man he is a creature, yet by means of his mediatory office he is so highly exalted above all creatures, that religious honour must be given him as *Lord of all.*" And in Section 13, " If it be objected, that omniscience and omnipotence are required in order to render any being adorable; I answer, not essential and absolute omnipotence and omniscience, but so much as is necessary to know all the thoughts and prayers of the worshippers, and to supply all their necessities; but we have shewn that both these belong to Jesus Christ as Mediator." Yet this author is a hearty defender of the blessed doctrine of the Trinity according to the common sentiments of Christianity, as appears in Book III. Chapter XVII.

A very ingenious gentleman of the church of England, who has discoursed *Of the future State, and the progressive Knowledge of the Saints there,* page 46, writes

* However Doctor Whitby in his latter days fell in pretty much with Doctor Samuel Clarke's opinion; yet when he wrote his *Annotations,* he was zealous against arianism, and a fervent defender of the proper deity of Christ, so that his sense on this point cannot be suspected here.

thus: "Our Lord Jesus Christ remains a true man in his glorified state, and yet certainly his presence is much more extensive than when he dwelt on earth. He may perhaps as easily inspect the whole globe of this earth, and the heavens that encompass and surround it, as any of us can view a globe or circumference of an inch diameter; for he is the sovereign of mankind: He is *prince of the kings of the earth:* He is the governor of the world. The laws by which they ought to live, and by which they must be judged, are his laws. Besides, he is our great intercessor with God Almighty; but how can he intercede for what he knows not, or know what he does not hear? How can all the prayers of his people come before him, unless his presence be very diffusive, and extend with the fabric of earth and heaven? I am not about to affirm the ubiquity of Christ's bodily presence, nor to determine the manner how he is present; but that Jesus Christ, even in his human nature, does view and take cognizance of the affairs of man, I think cannot be doubted."

Page 49, "*Christ is the head of his church,* even in his human nature: How can he know the usefulness and the necessity of special communications to the several and single members of his body, without a largeness of presence? In brief, Christ Jesus, considered as man and mediator, is the great and general administrator of all the affairs of this human world; whatever is done in it, he does it, for 'all power in heaven and in earth is given unto him.' *Great is the mystery of godliness;* and certainly, even the *man Christ Jesus* is a far more glorious person than the most of Christians, yea, or of christian divines, do conceive or apprehend. He is called *the Sun of righteousness,* and compared to light, and doth enlighten all the intellectual world. He is *the express image of his Father's person;* that is, perhaps, the most lively character and expression of the deity that is among created beings. He is *sat down at the right-hand of the Majesty on high;* that is, he is, next the pure godhead, the most illustrious essence in the world.

"Let no man misunderstand me in what I have said concerning the human nature of Christ Jesus. I do not deny his divine nature, nor the union thereof to the human; I extend the presence of his human nature no farther than the nature of his mediatory office doth require it. And touching the doctrine of the Trinity, and the union of the eternal Word with the human nature, I esteem it the great essential, as well as the great mystery of the christian religion, and do very heartily believe it."

Dr. Thomas Goodwin, in his *Treatise of the Heart of Christ in Heaven,* Part III. says, "The understanding of the human nature of Christ hath notice and cognizance of all the occurrences that befal his members here. And for this the text is clear; for the apostle speaks this for our encouragement, that Christ is touched with the feeling of our infirmities; which could not be a relief to us, if it supposed not this, that he particularly and distinctly knew them; and if not all as well as some, we should want relief in all, as not knowing which he knew, and which he knew not. And the apostle affirms this of his human nature, as was said, for he speaks of that nature that was tempted here below. As *all power in heaven and earth is committed unto him, as Son of man,* as the Scripture speaks; so all knowledge is given him of all things done in heaven and earth, and this as

Son of man too, his knowledge and power being of equal extent. He is the sun as well in respect of knowledge as of righteousness, and *there is nothing* hid from his light and beams, which do pierce the darkest corners of the hearts of the sons of men; he knows the sores and distresses of their hearts. Like as a looking-glass made into the form of a round globe, and hung in the midst of a room, takes in all the species of things done, or that are therein at once; so doth the enlarged understanding of Christ's human nature take in the affairs of this world, which he is appointed to govern, especially the miseries of his members, and this at once."

The same author, in his second volume in folio, Book III. page 95, has a large *Treatise upon the Extensive Glories and Powers of Christ, considered as God-man,* wherein he exalts his human nature to a most amazing degree.

Mr. Baxter, in his *Annotations on Phil.* ii. 9, affirms, "God highly exalted him in the manhood in which he suffered, and hath given him greater dignity and honour and renown than any creature ever had; that to his dignity and power all creatures should be subject, and angels, and men, and devils should by their submission respectively honour his name." And in his *Paraphrase on Heb.* ii. 9, "As his death was suffered in the common nature of man, so he died to bring man to glory with himself, and therefore this text may be well understood of the advancement of man, both in Christ and in his church."

Thus we find there are some learned writers of most of the sects and parties in the christian world, who have declared themselves freely to embrace this opinion, and to believe the most extensive knowledge and power of the human nature of Christ in his present glorified state.

DISCOURSE III.

THE

GLORY OF CHRIST AS GOD-MAN DISPLAYED,

BY TRACING OUT THE EARLY EXISTENCE OF HIS HUMAN NATURE AS THE FIRST-BORN OF GOD, OR AS THE FIRST OF ALL CREATURES, BEFORE THE FORMATION OF THIS WORLD.

SECTION I.

INTRODUCTION.

THE various glories of our blessed Lord are the subject of our holy meditation and our joy. There are wonders enough in his person, his characters and offices, to raise our sacred curiosity, and to entertain our delightful inquiries, in time and eternity. Many of these are displayed by the gospel in an open and illustrious light; others are yet unrevealed and reserved till we shall see him *face to face:* And there are also some which are revealed, but with less glaring evidence, and are contained like hidden treasures in the mines of Scripture, to awaken our diligence in the pursuit of this divine knowledge; and there is reason to hope, that every spark of new discovered glory will richly recompense the labour of our inquiries.

The foregoing discourse hath led us to find some surprising powers and excellencies in the man Christ Jesus, which perhaps have not been much known or commonly observed. It is pleasant and astonishing to think how far the human soul of our exalted Lord, under the conduct of his divine nature, may have a hand in the government of the nations and the judgment of the world. This invites our faith to look forward to the great resurrection-day with holy pleasure and expectation. And if we turn our eyes backward to the beginning of all things, and read the Scripture with studious search, perhaps we may spy some early glories attending his sacred person, which we never thought of before.

Now if by a more careful inspection into the word of God, we shall find it revealed there with unexpected evidence, that the "human soul of our Lord Jesus Christ had an existence, and was personally united to the divine nature, long before it came to dwell in flesh and blood;" and that by this glorious person, God the Father managed the affairs of his ancient church as his own supreme minister and as the great Mediator and King of his people, and that at a certain appointed period

of time God sent down this blessed soul, willingly divested of primitive joys and glories, to take flesh in the womb of the virgin, to dwell in the body of an infant, and grow up by degrees to the perfection of a man, and in this body to suffer a thousand indignities and injuries from men and devils, and to sustain intense pains or agonies from some unknown manifestations of the wrath of God against sin, and at last submit to death and the grave; I say, if we should find such a doctrine contained in the Scripture, will not such thoughts as these spread a new lustre over all our former ideas of the glory of Christ, even in his human nature, and add to the condescensions of our blessed Saviour, considered as God and man in one person? How happily will it make the whole scheme of our religion, and the book of God which reveals it, more intelligible and delightful to all those who love Christianity? And it will render this sacred volume much more defensible against the men who doubt or deny the blessed doctrines of it.

But that I may not anticipate my design, let us proceed to unfold this doctrine by degrees, according to the following propositions.

SECTION II.

SOME PROPOSITIONS LEADING TO THE PROOF OF THE DOCTRINE PROPOSED.

Proposition I. "It is evident from many places of Scripture, that Christ had an existence before he took flesh upon him, and came into this world."

John i. 1, *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.* Verse 3, *All things were made by him.* Verse 14, *And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.* Chapter xii. 41, *These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him:* Wherein the apostle John attributes to our Lord Jesus Christ that actual glorious appearance which Isaiah saw of the Lord of hosts, *chapter* vi. 1—4. John iii. 13, *No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man, which is in heaven,* ὁ ὢν ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ, or, "which was in heaven," for both senses are agreeable to the Greek. Chapter viii. 58, *Before Abraham was, I am.* Chapter i. 15, *He that cometh after me is preferred before me,* says John the Baptist, because *he was before me:* ἔμπροσθεν μου γέγονεν ὅτι πρῶτός μου ἦν. One of these words, which we render *before me,* seems necessarily to signify a priority of time, and it is hard to say which of both of them cannot do so, but the same thing cannot be proved by itself. The verse may be construed thus: "This is he of whom I said, he that comes after me had a being before me, for indeed he was before me;" that is, "he is more excellent than I;" or thus, "he was preferred before me, because he had his being before I had mine," though as to his natural birth as man, Christ was six months younger than John. So Dr. Goodwin and many others interpret this text.

But I proceed to other Scriptures, which prove the existence of Christ before his incarnation.

John iii. 31, *He that cometh from above, is above all; he that is of the earth, is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: He that cometh from heaven is above all.* 1 Cor. xv. 47, *The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven.* John vi. 33, *The bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and*

giveth life unto the world. Verse 38, *I came down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him that sent me.* Verse 51, *I am the living bread, which came down from heaven.* Verse 62, *What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?* Chapter xvi. 28, *I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world; again, I leave the world, and go to the Father.* Chapter xvii. 5, *Glorify thou me, O Father, with thine ownself, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.* 1 Cor. x. 9, *Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents.* 2 Cor. viii. 9, *Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor.* Philip. ii. 6, 7, *Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation—and was made in the likeness of men.* Colos. i. 15, 17, *Who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature; for by him were all things created—and he is before all things.* Heb. i. 2, *His Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds.* 1 John iv. 2, 3, *Every spirit which confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God; and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not of God.* Rev. iii. 14, Christ is called *the beginning of the creation of God.* Ἡ ἀρχὴ τῆς κτίσεως τοῦ Θεοῦ.

I might also cite other Scriptures from the Old Testament, where Christ is represented sometimes as *Jehovah*, or *God Almighty;* and sometimes as *the angel of the Lord*, and as *the captain of the Lord's host*, appearing to the patriarchs, conversing with Abraham, wrestling with Jacob, giving orders to Moses, encouraging Joshua and Gideon, &c. But I shall have occasion to mention them immediately, and therefore I omit the citations here.

Proposition II. "Among those expressions of Scripture which discover the pre-existence of Christ, there are several from whence we may derive a certain proof that he has the divine nature in him, and is true God."

Such are those places of the Old Testament, where the angel that appeared to the ancients is called *God*, the *Almighty God*, *Jehovah*, the *Lord of hosts*, *I am that I am*, *&c.*

Such are those places in Scripture, in the Old and New Testament, where he is called *God*, or *Jehovah*, and is said expressly to "create the world;" *John* i. 1, 2, 3. *Rom.* ix. 5. *Heb.* i. 10, 11. &c. with some others.

It appears probable to me also, that when our Lord says, John viii. 58, *Before Abraham was, I am*, he does not only mean to express his pre-existence, but his divine nature also. I AM being the name of God, *Exod.* iii. 14. And the great modern refiner of the arian scheme, Doctor Samuel Clarke, allows so much as this, *viz.* "That from our Saviour's using the words 'I am,' instead of 'I was,' he might possibly intend to insinuate that he was the person in whom the name of God was, *viz.* Jehovah, or I AM:" And he adds, "This indeed cannot be denied;" though he will not allow him here to describe himself as the self-existent Being. See Doctor Clarke's *Scripture Doctrine*, Chapter II. Section III. Number 591.

But there are many proofs of the divinity of Christ which are cited, and confirmed under the Eighth and Ninth Propositions of the *Discourse on the Christian Doctrine of the Trinity*, and which are needless to be repeated here.--See pages 287--320.

Proposition III. "There are other Scriptures which denote the pre-existence

of Christ, and may also perhaps include a reference to his divine nature, but carry not with them such a full and convincing evidence of his godhead, as utterly to exclude all other interpretations."

Such are these: John iii. 31, *He that cometh from above is above all*, &c. 1 Cor. xv. 47, *The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven.* John iii. 13, *No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man, which is in heaven.**

Proposition IV. "But there are some texts which insinuate the existence of Christ before he came into the flesh, which in their most natural, obvious, and evident sense, seem to refer to some intelligent nature belonging to our Lord Jesus Christ, which is inferior to godhead."

This will be made evident under the following proposition.

Proposition V. "Whatsoever Scriptures represent Christ as existent before his incarnation in a nature inferior to godhead, do most naturally lead us to the belief of the pre-existence of his human soul."

If there be any such Scriptures, they must refer either to the human soul of Christ, which was afterward united to his human body, or to some other super-angelical nature, as some call it, which might belong to our Saviour, besides his human soul.

And this is evident, that this very notion of some persons, concerning a super-angelical spirit belonging to him† beside his human soul, arose from those many expressions concerning him before his incarnation which seem inferior to deity. Some writers saw these sort of expressions so strong in Scripture, that they would venture to introduce three intellectual beings in the person of Christ, rather than not yield to the apparent force of these expressions.

But surely it is not worthy of a philosopher, or a divine, to multiply natures in our Lord Jesus without reason, and to ascribe to him any such third intellectual nature, if the expressions of Scripture on this head may be most evidently explained without it, and may be better applied to his human soul.

Now that there are such expressions, that seem to intimate a nature inferior to God, belonging to Christ before he came in the flesh, will appear by the following

* I confess, I have cited this text in a former treatise, to prove the omnipresence of Christ as God; and perhaps that may be part of the true meaning of it: But I have lately found two or three writers of name, who heartily believed the godhead of Christ, and yet suppose this text may refer to his pre-existent soul, because ὁ ὢν ἐν οὐρανῷ, which we render, *which is in heaven*, may be as well rendered, "who was in heaven," the participle ὢν being equally capable of the past as well as the present tense or time. So St. John himself expresseth the time past, "he was," by ὢν, chapter ix. 35, where the blind man cured by our Lord, says, *I was blind*, τυφλὸς ὢν. And St. Paul expresseth "who was," in the same manner twice, ὑμᾶς ὄντας νεκρούς, *Ephes.* ii. 1, and verse 5, *You who were dead.* Beza himself inclines to construe this word, "who was in heaven," in this text. Upon the whole, I doubt whether this text will certainly prove Christ's divinity, and whether it may not more directly refer to his pre-existent soul. For since there are proofs enough of the divinity of Christ, which are strong in my opinion, and unanswerable, I would not constrain such passages of Scripture into this service whose force and sense are rendered doubtful by any just rules of criticism.

† *Note*, If in this, or any other of my writings, I speak of the soul of Christ as being an angel, or an angelic spirit, or in an angelic state, I mean nothing else but his existing without a body, as angels do; or his being a messenger of God the Father, as they are; and in this sense the Scripture calls him an angel several times. Or if I speak of him as a super-angelic spirit, I intend no more than his having both natural and deputed powers, far superior to angels; for I always suppose this soul to be truly and properly a human spirit in its own nature, that is, a spirit suited to the state of union with a human body, and to all the natural acts and effects, appetites and passions, derived from such an union.

considerations: And they may all be explained in the easiest manner, by applying them to the human soul of Christ.

SECTION III.

ARGUMENTS FOR THE PRE-EXISTENCE OF CHRIST'S HUMAN SOUL, DRAWN FROM VARIOUS CONSIDERATIONS, OF SOMETHING INFERIOR TO GODHEAD ASCRIBED TO HIM, BEFORE AND AT HIS INCARNATION.

THE first set of arguments I shall use, arises from several things ascribed to Christ before and at his incarnation, which seem to be of too low a nature for pure godhead.

Consideration I. "Christ is represented as his Father's messenger, minister, or angel, that was a distinct being from his Father, sent by his Father to perform such actions and such services for his people long before his incarnation, some of which seem too low for the dignity of pure godhead."

The appearances of Christ to the patriarchs are described like the appearances of an angel, or a man, a glorious man really distinct from God, and yet such a one in whom God or Jehovah had a peculiar indwelling, or with whom the divine nature had a personal union. When the *angel of the Lord* visited Abraham, and talked with him, when the *man* wrestled with Jacob till break of day, when the *angel* conversed with Moses and with Joshua, and yet calls himself, or is by the holy writers called, *Jehovah, the Almighty, the Lord, the God of Abraham, &c.* the most natural and obvious idea which they could have of the person appearing to them, was the idea of some glorious being or spirit that belonged to the other world, and in whom the great God had a peculiar dwelling, and by whom the great God pronounced those words, or conversed with them.

That text, *Exod.* xxiii. 20, 21, very naturally leads us to this sense; God says to Moses, *Behold, I send an angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, &c.—obey his voice, provoke him not; for he will not pardon your transgressions, for my name is in him.* Here is an angel or messenger sent by God the Father; that is certainly an inferior character, yet he is to be obeyed with reverence, for he can punish or pardon sins; this is a divine prerogative, and how does this angel come by it? It is not as he is an angel, or in his angelic nature, but it is because God's name is in him, that is, his divine power, his godhead is in him; that is given as the reason of this high prerogative; God is united to this glorious spirit or this human soul of Christ: Now it is plain that Christ is called an angel in other places. He is the *messenger* or angel *of the covenant,* he is *the angel of God's presence,* so he is called *Mal.* iii. 1, and *Isaiah* lxiii. 9.

Let us argue a little further on these appearances of Christ to the patriarchs: Does it not seem more congruous that a human soul should animate that human body which ate and drank with Abraham under a tree, and should actuate those human limbs, when a man wrestled with Jacob? Is it not beneath the grandeur, decency, and dignity of the supreme Majesty of heaven, to supply the place of such a human soul, for the purposes or actions of animal nature? And that the

great and eternal God himself, in an immediate manner, should converse in so humane and familiar a way as this angel did with several of the patriarchs? That the glorious and almighty Godhead should itself animate a human body, to visit Abraham, and tarry with him some hours under a tree, while his wife made cakes, and dressed the flesh of a calf for God to eat? That the eternal God, animating a body, should eat of the calf which was dressed with milk and butter; *Gen.* xviii. 1, 2, &c.? That the almighty and ever-blessed God himself should immediately wrestle with Jacob in human limbs, which he assumed, and that a good part of the night should be spent thus wrestling until break of day, *Gen.* xxxii. 24, &c.? That the eternal godhead itself should talk so familiarly with Gideon, and let Gideon use such a familiar way of talking with God, as is recorded *Judges* vi. 1—11? Doth this suit with the supreme glory and dignity of eternal godhead and pure divinity? Doth it not seem more agreeable that God should do all this by the intermediation of a human soul, appearing in a visible shape, than that the infinite majesty of God should immediately abase itself in such a manner?

Is it not much more natural and easy, and more condecent in itself, as well as more agreeable to the words of Scripture, to suppose that it was the human soul of Christ, assuming a body at that time for those human purposes? And thus he might be called *the angel* or *messenger of God*, because God sent him; for the word *angel* doth not signify originally the name of a nature, but of an office.

He might also upon this supposition, with more justness and propriety of speech, be called *a man*, when he appears in the form of a man, and with the appetites, passions, and actions of a man; *Gen.* xviii. 2, 4, 5, 8, 17, and xxxii. 24; for the soul is the chief part of a man, and especially when that soul appeared in a human body.

And yet at the same time he might be properly called *God*, *the Lord*, and *Jehovah;* for this man or angel, this human soul in an assumed body, was personally united to God, or had the fulness of the godhead dwelling in him by a personal union; though the more immediate agent in these animal and common actions of life was the human soul, rather than the eternal and blessed God.

The same things may be said concerning the visions which the prophets Amos and Zechariah had of our Lord Jesus Christ, when he *stood upon the wall with a plumb-line in his hand*, Amos vii. 7, and when he stood *upon the altar*, chapter ix. 1. Or when "Joshua the high-priest stood before him, and Satan at his right-hand to resist him," *Zech.* iii. 1. These corporeal scenes seem better to befit the human soul of Christ than pure godhead, though in these appearances he is sometimes called *the angel of the Lord*, and sometimes *the Lord*, or *Jehovah*, for the reason before given, *viz.* because he is one with God by so intimate an union.

Consideration II. "Christ, when he came into this world, is said to empty and divest himself of some glory which he had before his incarnation, in several places of Scripture. Now if nothing but his divine nature existed before this time, this divine nature could not properly empty, or divest itself of any glory: Therefore it must be his inferior nature, or his human soul, which did then exist and divest itself of its ancient glory for a season."

The first text I shall mention, is that famous one in the prayer of Christ, John xvii. 4, 5, *I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory*

which I had with thee before the world was. It seems very plain from these words, that Christ parted with some glory which he had in heaven, when he came down to finish the work which God gave him to do on earth, and he prays to be restored to it again. I appeal to every reader, whether this is not the most obvious and natural sense?

Now the glory which belongs to God, is either essential or manifestative. The divine nature of Christ could not lose or part with any essential glories; for they are the very nature and essence of God: Nor had the divine nature any manifestative glories before the world was, which it lost at the incarnation: For,

1. It had no manifestative glories at all, if there were no angels, no creatures to which they could be manifested. Or,

2. If it be supposed that angels were before "this lower world was, and that the godhead of our Lord Jesus Christ might then be known and glorified by angels;" it may be justly replied, that suppose this be true, yet he did not part with that glory at his coming into our world, for the angels did not forget his dignity, they continued to know and glorify Christ; they worshipped him on earth, *Heb.* i. 6, and ministered unto him as their sovereign, on various occasions.

Since therefore it cannot be the divine nature that parted with this glory, nor can the divine nature pray for the restoration of it, then it follows that the human nature had such an early existence, and such glory; for we cannot suppose the human nature in this place prays for a glory which it never had. This seems contrary to the most obvious sense of the text.

Or, shall we say, as the socinians do, that the human nature prays for a glory which it had in the eternal counsels and decrees of God? But all the elect of God had also glory before the world was, in this sense, *viz.* in the eternal decrees and counsels: And how very forced and unnatural an interpretation is this! Yet it is such as the socinians are constrained to take up with, though without any reason: Besides, how unhappily would such an exposition tend to support the antinomian language of our justification from eternity, &c.*

But how easy, plain, and obvious is the sense of these words, if we suppose the soul of our Lord Jesus Christ to be *the first-born of every creature,* as *Col.* i. 15, and thus to enjoy real glory and dignity in the Father's presence before the world was, as well as in all the following ages, until he emptied himself of it at his incarnation? And then he prays thus, "Father, I have finished the work on earth, which thou gavest me to do in

* Since this treatise was written, I have met with another explication of this text, in opposition to the sense I have given, and which I confess may seem something more plausible than the rest, *viz.* That the human nature or person of Christ, does not here pray for any glory to be restored which was lost, but for the present manifestation of the glory of his godhead to mankind, which glory was really eternal, and before the creation: Or he prays, that the human nature may have its due share of honour, upon the account of its union to the divine nature, which had a glory before the world was; which honour was withheld from the human nature in a great measure till his sufferings were finished: So that with regard to his divine nature, he prays only for the manifestation of the glory; but in respect of his human nature, he prays for the real communication of that glory which might belong to such a sublime union with the eternal godhead.

All that I shall reply to this at present is, that it is so much more difficult and intricate for any reader to find out this exposition, than that which I have given, that I leave any impartial person to judge which is the most natural and easy sense, and which must the apostles most naturally receive and understand when these words were spoken in their hearing? Indeed, all other expositions, besides this which I here support, are forced and strained, and distant from the natural ideas which occur to every reader. And all divines who believe not the doctrine of Christ's pre-existent soul, have been always puzzled to find any tolerable sense to put upon these words.

my state of humiliation here; and now, O Father, take me to thyself in heaven, where I once was, and glorify me with the real glory which I had there before the creation: My days of appointed abasement are past, therefore let the power, splendour, and dignity, which I have possessed in thy presence before the world was, be restored to me."

The words, *with thine ownself*, in our Saviour's prayer, seem to determine it to be a real glory which he once had in God's own presence. This seems so evidently to be the sense and meaning of our Lord in his prayer, that if persons were not unacquainted with this doctrine, of the pre-existence of the soul of Christ; or if they had not some prejudice against it, one would think that every reader should naturally and necessarily take it in this sense.

That it is the human nature of Christ that was thus glorified in its pre-existent state, may be confirmed from verse 24, *Thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.* Now this would be a very small thing for Christ to say, as to his divine nature, or godhead, that the Father loved him before the creation; but it is great and glorious, and every way suitable to his purpose, to be spoken by him as a man, referring to his pre-existent state and nature, for it gives a grand idea of him as the early and ancient object of his Father's love.

Nor can this ancient love be referred only to the decree of God, for this decretal love of God may be spoken of the saints also; the Father loved them as foreseen in his eternal decrees: Whereas the plain design of Christ is, to request that enjoyment of divine love for the saints in their measure, which he himself actually tasted and enjoyed before the foundation of the world.

Note further: He does not pray for the disciples, that they may enjoy such love as is supposed to be peculiar to the internal distinctions in the godhead, but such sort of love in their degree, as he himself enjoyed in his pre-existent soul; which exposition also renders all the latter verses of this chapter more intelligible: Verses 21, 22, *&c. that they may be one, as we are one;* and—*thou hast loved them as thou hast loved me.* The love which the great God bears to Christ as man, and the union of Christ as man to the godhead, is made a pattern of the union of the saints to God, and the love of God to them: But we can hardly suppose the ineffable, eternal and essential, and necessary union and love between the sacred distinctions in the godhead itself, can be a pattern of the unnecessary, unessential, and voluntary union and love between God and his saints. Yet the union and love between Christ as man, and God his Father, may be made a pattern of the love and union between God and believers; though we must always maintain a high sense of the unknown and sublime difference between the union of the man Christ to the divine nature, or to any particular distinction in it, and the union of the saints to God: The one is so near, as that what God himself speaks and does, is attributed to Christ; but it would be blasphemy to attribute this to the best of saints.

It is a certain and excellent rule for the interpretation of Scripture, laid down by all judicious men, and particularly by a great adversary of this doctrine, Dr. Sherlock, "that we should never have recourse to a strained and metaphorical sense, but when we know that either the nature of the thing, or some other revelation of Scripture, will not admit of a proper one; and that we must understand words in a proper and natural sense, where there is no apparent reason of a figure." Now there is nothing,

either in nature or in Scripture that forbids this literal exposition, as will more abundantly appear in the following part of this discourse.

The second Scripture I shall cite for this purpose, to shew that some things inferior to godhead are ascribed to Christ, before and at his incarnation, is in Phil. ii. 5, *Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus;* verse 6, *who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God;* verse 7, *but made himself of no reputation,* ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσε, which is more exactly translated, "he emptied himself,"* *and took upon him the form of a servant,* being *made in the likeness of men,* as it is in the Greek, ἐν ὁμοιώματι ἀνθρώπων γενόμενος.

Here the apostle's design is to set Christ before them as a pattern of humility; and this he doth by aggrandizing his former state and circumstances, and representing how he emptied himself of them, and appeared on earth in a very mean and low estate. Therefore he saith, *Who being in the form of God, thought it no robbery to be equal with God;* that is, his human soul, which is the chief part of the man, being in union with his godhead, was vested with a god-like form and glory in all former ages; thus he oftentimes appeared to the patriarchs, as the *angel of the Lord*, and as *God* or *Jehovah*, with a heavenly brightness about him, or clothed with the divine *shechinah*, the robe of light, and spake and acted like God himself. This seems to be *the form of God*, which the apostle speaks of; nor did he think it any robbery or sinful presumption so to do, that is, to appear and act as God, since he was united to the divine nature, and was in that sense one with God:† Yet he emptied himself, that is, he divested himself of this god-like form or appearance, this divine *shechinah*, and coming into the flesh, he consented to be made in the likeness of other men; nay, he took upon him the form of a servant instead of the form of a God; that is, instead of the glorious vestment of light, in which he once appeared and acted as God, he now came in a mean servile form, and humbled himself even to death, &c. as it follows.

Now that this text is most naturally interpreted concerning the pre-existent soul of Christ and its humiliation, and not concerning the abasement of his human nature, will appear, if we attend to these things:

1. It is the chief design of this Scripture to propose to the Philippians a wondrous

* See Doctor Goodwin's exposition of this text in a few pages following. See page 685.

† I might have omitted the paraphrase of these words, who *thought it not robbery to be equal with God*, since I am constrained to confess that I am not fully satisfied in the true meaning of them. Those who will read with an impartial eye what Doctor Whitby has written in his Annotations on this text, even while he was zealous against the arian doctrines, and took all opportunities in his comments to refute them, and who consider, at the same time, what sense the ancient greek writer Heliodorus in several places, and the greek fathers generally, put upon this phrase, will be ready to believe they signify, that "Christ did not think equality with God to be ἁρπαγμον, a thing to be seized, a thing to be assumed by him, he did not think proper to appear like God, or assume equality to God in his humble state;" and so this sentence expresses one part of his humility. On the other hand, he that peruses what the learned Doctor Waterland has written in his sermon on this text, may be inclined to doubt of this exposition of Doctor Whitby and the fathers, and to construe these words as part of the most exalted dignity of Christ, according to our English translation: Though Doctor Waterland himself does not deny that the ancient greek writer Heliodorus, and most of the ancient fathers, expounded it in the sense which Doctor Whitby gives of it.

However, I have here followed our English translation, and paraphrased it as expressive of Christ's most exalted character and godhead, that it may evidently appear that the other parts of this verse are most happily applied to the pre-existence and the incarnation of the human soul of Christ, even though these controverted words should be referred to his divine nature; and that this doctrine of Christ's pre-existent soul does not want any change in the common English translation, nor the sense of this phrase to be altered, in order to support it.

example of humility and self-denial. Now a great and pious writer of this age has observed, that we never find the divine nature, or godhead, propounded to us, as an example of self-denial or humility, in all the Bible; though God commands our conformity to himself, in holiness, love, and beneficence. Therefore it must be some inferior nature, or Christ's human soul, is proposed as an example of humility and self-denial; and a glorious example it was, when it divested itself of such a god-like form, and such a pre-existent glory.

2. Christ's being in the form of God cannot here necessarily signify his godhead, because it is represented as inconsistent with the state of his humiliation; for he seems to put off this form of God, or he emptied himself of it, and put on the opposite form, *viz.* the form of a servant, when he became incarnate, or was made in the likeness of men; but it is plain that he could not put off his godhead when he became incarnate: Therefore it must refer to his human soul, which was in the form of God, or which made these god-like appearances before his incarnation, and he put off this divine form, when he took on him the fashion of a man, and the form of a servant.

Besides, the form of God can never be proved to signify his divine nature in this place; for there is no expression like it in Scripture, that signifies proper divinity. Nor indeed does μορφὴ properly signify nature or essence any where in the Bible, that I can find, but only appearance, shape, or likeness. See the large citation out of Dr. Thomas Goodwin, in the page following.

Observe also, that the *form of God* stands here expressly opposed to the *form of a servant:* Now Christ was not directly and expressly in the condition of a servant in the civil life here on earth, though he "condescended to perform servile offices upon some occasions; but at the same time he claimed the authority of a master, over those very persons for or towards whom he performed servile offices: The condition of our Saviour, therefore, whilst on earth, though it was always mean, yet was not properly that of a servant; and consequently, since his being *in the form of a servant,* cannot possibly signify more than his acting sometimes as a servant, though he was not such by condition of life, it is plain that his being *in the form of God* cannot possibly signify his being by nature the very God." But rather his appearing sometimes heretofore and acting as God. So Dr. Bennet, *on the Trinity,* Chapter VII. pages 45—50, who is a zealous defender of the deity of Christ, against Dr. Clarke.

3. Consider further, it seems to be that same nature emptied itself which was afterwards filled with glory as a recompence: And it is the same nature that is said to humble itself, which was afterwards highly exalted by God: Now this was not the divine nature of Christ, but the human; therefore it must be the human nature of Christ that emptied itself in this text; because it appears very incongruous for the apostle to say, that the divine nature emptied and abased itself, and that the human nature was exalted as a recompence of this abasement.

I grant it was great condescension in the divine nature of Christ to unite itself to a creature, such as the human soul of Christ was, how glorious soever that creature might be; and it is yet greater condescension in the godhead of our Lord Jesus Christ, thus united to the human soul, to take human flesh upon it, or flesh in union with that soul, and for God himself to be thus manifested in the flesh: And in my judgment the infinite merit of his sufferings arises from the union of his divine nature to the soul, and thereby to the body of *the man Jesus:* But this does not seem to be the precise meaning

of the apostle in this place; for he rather sets before us an example of the humility of the *man Jesus Christ*, who existed as a spirit personally united to God, or *one with God*, in all former ages, and was dressed in glories suitable to this union; yet he laid aside those glories, and waved the resplendence of his character and person, when he joined himself to flesh and blood; he laid aside the godlike forms and appearances, which perhaps he had worn both in heaven and on earth in times past, and emptied himself, when he came now into the world to be incarnate, that is, when he came into the complete likeness and fashion of a man; for he appeared in a mean form, like a servant, and humbled himself even to the cursed death of the cross.

Lest any of my readers should be offended with my exposition of this text, I will here add Dr. Thomas Goodwin's interpretation of it, Volume III. Book III. Chapter VII. page 106: "That nature or creature which the Son of God shall assume, be it man or angel, must by inheritance exist in *the form of God;* Phil. ii. 6, 7; which *form of God* I here take not to be put for the essence of God, neither is *the form of a servant* taken for the nature of a man. The *form of God* here is that godlike glory, and that manifestation of the godhead, which was, and must needs be due, to appear in the nature assumed; for *form* is put for outward appearance and manifestation, in respect of which, Christ, as god-man, is called *the brightness of his Father's glory*, Heb. i. 2. Brightness, you know, is not the substance of the light, but the appearance of it. And in this respect, Christ, God-man, may be said in a safe sense to be *equal with God*, as here in the text; not in essence, but in a communication of privileges, that as God *hath life in himself*, alone, which is a royalty incommunicable to any mere creature, so this *Son of man*, when once united unto the godhead, is also said *to have life in himself*, John v. 26; this equality, or ἰσότης, not being to be understood of equality in proportion, but of likeness; his privileges were such by the union with the second person, that he had a true kind of partnership with God the Father in his privileges, and such as did arise to a likeness, though not to an essential equality." And Chapter VIII. page 110, he adds, "The first ingredient into the satisfaction of Christ lies in the laying aside the glory due to the second person, when he should dwell in a human nature, and instead thereof taking on him *the form of a servant*.—God will have him emptied, the Messiah shall have nothing left, not a grain or mite of the riches of his glory." And in Volume II. *Of the Knowledge of God*, Book III. page 201, he adds, "He that had all fulness had nothing left, no comfort in God nor in any creature: He might say, as Naomi saith, "The Lord hath dealt bitterly with me; I came from heaven full, but he brought me to earth empty, and emptied of all." Thus far that eminent and pious writer.

But after all, if any humble Christians should be afraid to admit my exposition of this text, which is so plain and natural, lest they should seem to weaken one supposed proof of the divinity of Christ, yet the next Scripture is as plain for my purpose, and will lead into no such danger.

And that is, 2 Cor. viii. 9, *Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.*

I know not how this can be well interpreted any other way than by supposing our Lord Jesus Christ as man, or his human soul, to pre-exist in a former state, wherein he was rich indeed, and endowed with many real glories and privileges; and yet he

divested himself of them, and became poor for our sakes, when he became incarnate, a helpless infant who lay in a manger, and was the son of a carpenter.

It cannot be said of God, or the divine nature, that *he became poor*, who is infinitely self-sufficient, and who is necessarily and eternally rich in perfections and glories, and in the indefeasable possession of all things: Nor can it be said of Christ as man, that he ever *was rich*, if he were never in a richer state before than while he was here on earth; for during that time he was always extremely poor; "the Son of man had not where to lay his head:" And he could not be in a richer state as man before, if nothing of this manhood existed before his incarnation.

But if, to evade this, any one will say, that he was rich as *God*, and became poor as *man*; Bishop Fowler answers, that this is "such a strain and force upon the words of Scripture, that it looks like laying hold upon any thing to help at a dead lift."

It appears then that our Lord Jesus Christ really emptied himself of some peculiar glories that belonged to him, and which he possessed in a pre-existent state, before he came to dwell in our world, and to take flesh upon him.

But I know and lament the unhappy force of prejudice. I have felt, and feel it too often, and therefore wonder not at other men. A mind pre-engaged cannot easily yield to the force of plain expressions and the literal sense of Scripture; therefore some will say, that Christ, as God-man, in the beginning of the union of the two natures, emptied or divested itself of the riches and glory which he should have had, and which were his *de jure*, though not *de facto;* that is, which he might justly have assumed and possessed, though he did not actually assume and possess them. But I reply, why should this Scripture be so strained, since this cannot be the sense of other Scriptures which are parallel to this? Particularly *John* xvii. 5, which speaks expressly of "glory which Christ had with the Father before the world was." And as for the other texts, *viz. Phil.* ii. 6, 7, and 2 *Cor.* viii. 9, they intimate more than a mere right to glorious riches, and plainly refer to a former actual possession of those riches and glories, of which he actually dispossessed himself. This is the most literal and obvious sense of the apostle, nor should we strain it to a tropical meaning without evident necessity.

The whole current of Scripture, as well as these particular texts, seems to lead us so naturally into this sentiment, that divines are frequently ready to describe God the Father as parting with his only Son out of his bosom, when he took flesh upon him; and they represent Christ, or the Son of God, when he became incarnate, as "leaving the bosom of his Father," "quitting the felicities of the upper world," "laying by his glorious estate," and "parting with heaven for a season," &c. which language cannot be true nor proper when it is applied to the godhead of Christ; but would most appositely denote and express the real humiliation of his pre-existent soul.

Consideration III. "That very being which came down from heaven, and was sent of God into the world, is represented as capable of having a will different from the will of God the Father, and therefore it must be inferior to godhead: Now this could be no other but the will of his human soul."

Our Lord Jesus declares, that "he came down from heaven, not to do his own, but his Father's will," *John* vi. 38. It is manifest here that the very same being which came down from heaven, sought not by his descent to fulfil his own will, but his Father's.

Now it is evident, that at his agonies and passion he had such a will different from the

will of his Father, when he manifests an innocent reluctance of human nature at first, but afterward says, Luke xxii. 42, *Father—not my will, but thine be done:* And you see he uses the same sort of language to express his incarnation and mission, though without any reluctance, John vi. 38, *I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.* Now would it not sound very harsh to suppose the godhead of Christ, saying, *I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me,* when it is utterly and eternally impossible that the godhead of Christ should have any will different from God the Father?

It is in the same manner that our Lord speaks in prophecy concerning himself, Psalm xl. 8, *I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea thy law is within my heart.* Now that this refers to his incarnation in an especial manner, we may learn from the *Epistle to the Hebrews,* where this prophecy is cited and explained, chapter x. 5, 7, *When he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me;—Lo, I come—to do thy will, O God.* This seems to be the proper language of his human soul, and not of pure godhead.

Those who refuse to expound this concerning Christ's pre-existent soul, apply it to his inferior and delegated character as Mediator, and as the Father's servant employed in this great errand. But I appeal to every one who reads the words, whether this language does not naturally seem much rather to belong to an inferior being, than to the eternal godhead assuming an inferior character.

Consideration IV. "Christ represents his own coming into the world, and being sent hither by the Father, in such a manner as naturally leads one to suppose he had a real and proper dwelling in another place,* and in another manner, before he came into this world, and that he then changed his place, and company, and manner of life; all which seem more agreeable to a human spirit, than to a divine person."

The mere repetition of our Saviour's own language in several Scriptures would naturally lead one to these ideas: John vi. 38, *I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.* Verse 51, *I am the living bread, which came down from heaven,* in imitation of the manna which came from the clouds. Verse 62, *What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?*† Chap. viii. 14, *I know whence I came, and whither I go.* Chap. xvi. 28, *I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: Again, I leave the world, and go to the Father.* In which words his being *with the Father,* and his being *in the world,* seem to be two opposite states, and are represented as inconsistent with each other in that sense in which Christ speaks of his Father's company and absence; but the pure divine nature can hardly be represented as absent from the Father, even while it resides in this world, nor as returning to him afterwards.

Let it be noted also, that as soon as Christ had spoke these words, his disciples answered, *Lo, now thou speakest plainly, and speakest no proverb;* that is, "there is no

* I do not here enter into that philosophical question, "whether separate souls have proper places or no, or any local motion;" but I speak after the common manner of speech, and the language of Scripture.

† Some may object against this text, and say, That it cannot mean that the human soul ascended where it was before, for the human soul in its pre-existent state cannot be called *the Son of man.* I answer, 1. That the name, *Son of man,* ordinarily signifies no more than man, or some considerable man, and when applied to Christ it means the Messiah. 2. It is at least a more proper term to signify Christ's human soul, than it is to signify his divine nature, and to say, "What if ye shall see the Son of man, that is, the human nature, ascend where the Son of man, that is, the divine nature, was before?" And yet this must be the exposition of the place, if Christ had no pre-existent soul, and I am sure this is much harder, and more catachrestical than the sense I have given.

difficulty or obscurity in these words." "No enigmatical or allegorical speech," saith Beza. But surely there is difficulty and obscurity in them, if we must construe them by figures, and not in the obvious sense; especially if his "coming from the Father," that is, as God, must be taken in a figurative sense, and his "going to the Father," that is, as man, in a literal.

There are other expressions of Scripture to the same purpose: John iii. 13, *No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man, who is*, or was, *in heaven*, as the Greek participle ὢν may be properly interpreted in the time past or present; and thus it may be construed to signify either the divinity of Christ, or rather his pre-existent soul.* Chap. iii. 31, *He that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth. He that cometh from heaven is above all.* Chap. xiii. 3, *Jesus knowing—that he was come from God, and* went *to God.* Ephes. iv. 9, 10, *Now that he ascended, what is it, but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?* This perhaps may be better interpreted concerning his descent into the womb of the virgin, than into the grave; for David uses the same expression, *Psalm* cxxxix. 15, where he says, "His substance was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth." Besides, it was the soul of Christ that descended from heaven, but not into the grave. *Now*, saith the apostle, *He that descended* thus, *is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens;* that is, "the soul descended to assume a body, and then being embodied, it ascended above the heavens."

Objection. There are expressions in the Old Testament which represent God as coming down upon earth to visit the affairs of men; and in this analogical sense the godhead of Christ may be said to ascend and descend, so that these words need not to be applied to any pre-existent soul of Christ.

Answer I. When this manner of speech is used concerning God, it must be interpreted figuratively or analogically, because the literal sense cannot be true: But where the literal sense is just, and plain, and easy, there is no need to run to figures.

Answer II. Let it be noted also, that when God is said to descend from heaven, or ascend thither, in the Old Testament, perhaps it is so expressed to shew that this God is Jesus Christ, or the human soul of Christ, united to the godhead in the pre-existent state, as shall be shewn hereafter, by whose service God the Father managed a thousand affairs of the ancient ages, and more especially such as had any relation to the welfare of the church, or the holy seed.

Answer III. But besides, when we consider the frequency of these expressions, Christ's coming down from heaven, coming from the Father, and coming into this world, they seem to bear a plain and just antithesis to his departing from the world, his returning to the Father, his ascending into heaven, which are mentioned at the

* This text is seized by the socinians, and pressed by them to support their invention of Christ's ascending locally to heaven after his baptism, there to receive more complete instructions from God. But the learned Mr. Fleming replies thus: "There can be no just inference from his denying the Jews to have ascended into heaven, that he had ascended thither himself, any more than if a native of Japan should come now to England, and speak to us after this manner: 'Ye have reason to believe what I say of my own country, for I speak what I have seen there, and do exactly know it. And none of you did ever go to Japan, excepting me only, who have my original residence there, and am a native of the place, and am come from thence hither.' Would these words necessarily infer, that he must have gone from England to Japan before he came from thence, because perhaps the connection of the words does not run in our usual mode of speaking?" Thus that author.

I might subjoin also, that the exaltation of Christ's human soul to the heavenly world immediately upon its first existence may be well enough called "an ascent into heaven," when it is evident that the Scripture uses many expressions as distant as this is from their grammatical meaning, in order to form a paronomasia, or chime of words, with an antithesis of sense, which were eastern beauties of speech.

same time. Now all these latter expressions are plainly understood by every reader concerning the human nature of Christ, and give us good ground to infer that the former expressions concerning his descent from heaven should be attributed to his human nature too; that is, to his human soul, which is the chief part of it.

Under this head, bishop Fowler adds for a further proof of it, 1 Cor. xv. 47, *The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven*; "which," says he, "the apostle speaks of Christ's original, in opposition to Adam's; thus, his soul was created on earth, a body being made out of the earth for it; but the soul of Christ was created in heaven, and therefore he is called *the Lord from heaven*." This is abundantly more intelligible, to me at least, than how the eternal Word should come down from heaven, otherwise than as in union with the soul of Christ; since the eternal Word ever filled all things with his presence, and therefore could never for a moment leave heaven, that is, really and properly, but only in an analogical sense.

I add also, that the following words confirm this sense: Verse 49, *As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly;* that is, "our souls are made now on earth and joined to bodies, to frail and feeble bodies, capable of disease and corruption, as was the soul of Adam, which was made on earth after his body was formed: But as the soul of Christ came down from heaven, and assumed a body upon earth, so the souls of the saints at the resurrection shall come down from heaven, and assume their immortal bodies upon earth:" And in this sense Christ, the second Adam, *the Lord from heaven*, is the pattern of the saints' resurrection much rather than the first; and the parallel which the apostle represents of our bearing the image of the *earthy* and the *heavenly* Adam, is much more just, perfect, and natural, if we take in this part of the resemblance as well as others.

Some would construe these words, *the Lord from heaven*, to signify the divine nature of Christ. But let it be observed, that the apostle's design here is only to shew how *the man Christ Jesus* shall be the pattern of saints raised in glory; and it is no part of his purpose here to represent saints as bearing the image of God, or his divine nature, but only the image of his glorified human nature; and therefore these glorious expressions rather refer to his human soul.

Now put all these things together, and we can hardly suppose our blessed Lord, or his apostles, should express his real and proper human descent from heaven in plainer words than those which have been cited, or in words more fitted to lead every common reader into this plain and easy sense.

To conclude this Section, if the most natural and obvious sense of Scripture leads us to believe, that there was a glorious Being, who is sometimes called *an angel*, and sometimes *a man*, under the Old Testament, who was clothed with peculiar rays of glory, and assumed divine prerogatives; and yet in other parts of his character and conduct appears much inferior to the majesty of pure godhead; and that this illustrious Being emptied and divested himself of his peculiar riches and glory, when he came to dwell in flesh, that he was capable of having a will different from the will of his Father, as appears in those words of his: *Father—not my will, but thine be done*, Luke xxii. 42; and that he did really leave his dwelling with the Father, and come down into our world; I know not to what subject all this can be so well applied as to the human soul of Christ, and its existence before his incarnation.

SECTION IV.

MISCELLANEOUS ARGUMENTS TO PROVE THE SAME DOCTRINE.

Though the considerations already offered carry with them a good force of argument, yet all the reasons which support the doctrine of Christ's pre-existent soul cannot be reduced to one general head. There are several others which are not so easily ranged under any head, that can give their assistance to this work; and therefore I call them miscellaneous, and propose them thus:

Argument I. "It seems needful that the soul of Christ should be pre-existent, that it might have opportunity to give its previous actual consent to the great and painful undertaking of atonement for our sins."

It was the human soul of Christ that endured all the weakness, poverty, and pain, of his infant state; that sustained all the labours and fatigues of life; that felt the bitter reproaches of men, and the sufferings of a shameful and bloody death, as well as the buffettings of devils, and the painful inflictions of the justice of God. This is evident, for neither the divine nature, nor the mere flesh or body, abstractly considered, are capable of pain nor shame without the human soul. Surely then it seems to be requisite that the soul of Christ should give its actual free consent to this undertaking before his labours, pains, or sorrows began, which was as soon as ever he was born.

One cannot but think it very congruous and highly reasonable, that he who was to undergo so much for our sakes should not be taken from his childhood in a mere passive manner into this difficult and tremendous work. And afterwards only give his consent to it when he was grown up a man, upon a secret divine intimation that he was born for this purpose. It looks most likely and condecent in respect of the nature of things, and the justice of God, that Christ's human soul, which endured all the pains, should well know before-hand what the glorious work of mediation would cost him, and that he should voluntarily accept the proposal from the Father: Otherwise it rather seems a task imposed upon him, than an original and voluntary engagement of his own; whereas such an imposition would seem to diminish the merit and glory of this noble undertaking, and is also contrary to Scripture in itself.

But if we suppose the human soul, united to the divine nature at its first creation, and being thereby fully capacitated for this amazing work, receiving the proposal with cheerfulness from God his Father from the foundation of the world, and then from an inward delight to glorify his Father, and from a compassionate principle to the children of men, undertaking this difficult and bloody service, and coming down into a human body to fulfil it; this highly exalts the merit of his love, and the condescending glory of his labours and his sufferings.

And indeed this voluntary consent of his to become incarnate and to suffer, is plainly represented in several places of Scripture: Psalm xl. 6, 7. Heb. x. 5, *Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire;* these were not sufficient to expiate the sin of man; *but a body hast thou prepared for me—then said I, Lo, I come,* that is, to dwell in this body, to undertake this work; *I delight to do thy will, O my God.* "And these two expressions, *Psalm* xl. 6, 8, 'My ears hast thou bored,' and 'thy law is in my heart,' are more proper," saith Dr. Goodwin, Vol. III. Book IV. pages 142, 143, "to apply to the soul

of this human nature, and to be understood to be the voice of his human nature, rather than of the divine: He was willing and obedient to do God's will, as a servant to do his master's." And this great author thought this consent so necessary, that he rather ventures to introduce a most miraculous scene, than to have this early consent of Christ as man omitted; and therefore he supposes, that in a miraculous way the human soul of Christ did give itself up to this work, from his very birth.

His own free consent appears plainly in these words, *He humbled himself,* Phil. ii. 8: He emptied himself of glory, when he became man, and died for sinners. And he himself took part of flesh and blood with this design, that he might die, " that he might through his death destroy the works of the devil," *Heb.* ii. 14. He declares further his own free consent, *John* vi. 38, " I came down from heaven to do my Father's will;" and John x. 17, 18, *Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me,* that is against my free consent; *but I lay it down of myself,* that is, of my own choice and voluntary engagement. " This thought I propose," says the Defender of Bishop Fowler's Discourse, " to be well considered by all free and ingenious minds, and by all those who would not in the least derogate from the honour of their blessed Mediator Christ Jesus," and the amazing love that appears in his mighty undertaking.

Argument II. " The covenant between God the Father and his Son Jesus Christ, for the redemption of mankind, is represented in Scripture as being made and agreed upon *from,* or *before, the foundation of the world.* Is it not then most proper that both real parties should be actually present, and that this should not be transacted merely within the divine essence by such sort of distinct personalities as have no distinct mind and will? The essence of God is generally agreed by our protestant divines to be the same single numerical essence in all three personalities, and therefore it can be but one conscious mind or spirit. Now can one single understanding and will make such a covenant as Scripture represents?"

I grant, the divine nature, which is in Christ from eternity, contrived and agreed all the parts of this covenant. But does it not add a lustre and glory, and more conspicuous equity, to this covenant, to suppose *the man Christ Jesus,* who is most properly the Mediator, according to 1 *Tim.* ii. 5, to be also present before the world was made, to be chosen and appointed as the Redeemer or Reconciler of mankind, to be then ordained the head of his future people, to receive promises, grace, and blessings, in their name, and to accept the solemn and weighty trust from the hand of his Father, that is, to take care of millions of souls? Read the following Scriptures, and see whether they do not imply thus much: 1 Tim. ii. 5, *There is one Mediator between God and men,* even *the man Christ Jesus.* Ephes. i. 3, 4, *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ; according as he hath chosen us in him, before the foundation of the world.* 2 Tim. i. 9, *God hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.* Tit. i. 2, *Eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began.* Now to whom could this promise be made but to Jesus Christ, and to us in him, as the great patron and representative of believers? Rev. xiii. 8, *All that dwell upon the earth shall worship* the beast, *whose names are not written in the book*

of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Whether these words, *from the foundation of the world,* refer to the slaying of the Lamb by way of anticipation, or rather to writing of the book of life, yet they certainly refer to the transaction of this important affair with the Lamb, and therefore this expression is used several times in *The Book of the Revelation.*

It was by virtue of this covenant, and the sacrifice of his own blood, which Christ was to offer in due time, that all the benefits of this covenant were derived upon mankind, in the various ages of it, ever since the fall of man; therefore Christ was a Saviour from the beginning of the world; and those who apply all these things merely to the divine nature of Christ, as consenting to this covenant upon the proposal of the Father, yet they suppose the human nature of Christ to be included in it, in the view of God the Father, by way of prolepsis, or anticipation. But surely it seems much more proper to explain these things concerning the human soul of Christ as actually united to the divine nature, and actually consenting to this covenant, since the human nature was to endure the sufferings, and then we need not be constrained to recur to such proleptical figures of speech, to interpret the language of Scripture, since the literal sense is just and true.

Thus it appears, if we consider this covenant as made between God the Father and his Son, and as it is usually called *the covenant of redemption,* it seems to require the pre-existence of the soul of Christ. Or if we consider the covenant of grace as it has been proposed to men in all ages since the fall, the existence of Christ as God-man appears requisite also to constitute him a proper Mediator. It does not seem to be so agreeable a supposition to make this covenant for the salvation of men from the vengeance of God to run on for the space of four thousand years together, that is, from the creation and fall of man to the incarnation of Christ, without any proper or suitable mediator or undertaker on the part of man. This covenant of the gospel, or of God in Christ, includes in the very nature and theory of it two real distinct parties, God and man; so that the title of *mediator* seems to require that man should be represented by the mediator as well as God, and that the complete person of the mediator should have some affinity to both parties, and actually agree to this covenant in that whole person before the communication of the benefits of it to the earliest ages of mankind.

Observe also, what was intimated before, that this *one Mediator* is particularly called *the man Christ Jesus,* 1 Tim. ii. 5, that the human nature may appear to be signally concerned in the mediation: And for the same reason, *the book of life* is said to belong to *the Lamb,* which name is applied to the human nature of Christ, in union with the divine, with much more propriety than it can be applied merely to the divine nature without such an union.

Argument III. Another argument for this doctrine of the existence of the soul of Christ before his incarnation, may be derived from the "scriptural descriptions of Christ's coming into the world. This is always expressed in some corporeal language, such as denotes his taking on him animal nature, or body, or flesh, without the least mention of taking a soul." Read the following Scriptures: John i. 14, *The word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.* Rom. i. 3, He *was made of the seed of David, according to the flesh.* Chap. viii. 3, *God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh.* Gal. iv. 4, *God sent forth his Son, made of a woman.* This word cannot necessarily imply the soul, for his soul could not be made of the soul or body of the Virgin Mary, but

his flesh or blood was made out of her's. Phil. ii. 7, 8, He *was made in the likeness of men, and* was *found in fashion as a man.* Now *shape* or *fashion* peculiarly refer to the body rather than the soul.

And in the Second Chapter to the *Hebrews*, where the apostle treats professedly of the incarnation of Christ, he seems to suppose that his soul existed before, and that he was like the children of God already in that respect; but, verse 14, *Forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that*—he might *in all things be made like unto his brethren*, as *verse* 17. And if he be said to take on him *the seed of Abraham*, verse 16, yet it is certain that the human body of Christ has a very proper and literal right to that name, rather than the soul, though the word *seed* may more frequently include both.

Again, it is said by the same apostle, in Heb. v. 7, *In the days of his flesh, he offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears;* that is, when he had taken flesh upon him, and dwelt in it. And *Heb.* x. when God the Father sends his Son into the world, he is said to prepare a body for him, but not a human soul; verse 5, *A body hast thou prepared me.*

The apostle John speaks several times of Jesus Christ's being *come in the flesh*, to signify his coming into the world, in his First and Second Epistles, intimating that the person who is vested with the name and character of Jesus and Christ, had every thing besides flesh before.

On the other hand, if Christ did take a human soul upon him, or the whole complex nature of man, at the same time when he was born of the virgin, it is a wonder that there should not be any one Scripture, neither in the Old or New Testament, which should give such a hint to us, that he then took a reasonable soul as well as a body. Or should tell us, at least, that he expressly assumed human nature, which might include both flesh and spirit: But that it should always use such words as chiefly and directly denote the body. This seems to carry some evident intimation that his human soul existed before.

Perhaps it will be objected here, that the word *flesh*, in many places of Scripture, signifies *mankind* or *human nature*, by the figure synecdoche, including the soul also. It is granted that *flesh* doth sometimes signify *mankind;* and this objection might be good, if the scriptural language never used any thing but the word *flesh* to denote human nature, and never distinguished the *flesh* and the *soul:* But since there are a great number of Scriptures where the *flesh* or *body* is distinguished from the *soul* or *spirit* of man on many occasions, it seems very natural and reasonable to expect there should be some one passage at least, in all the Bible, wherein the divine nature of Christ should be said to assume a human soul as well as a body or flesh, when he came into our world, if this spirit or soul had no existence before the incarnation. And we have the more reason to expect this also when we observe, that there is mention made of the soul of Christ himself in several places of Scripture on other occasions; as Isaiah liii. 10, *Thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin.* Verse 11, *He shall see of the travail of his soul.* Luke xxiii. 46, *Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.* Acts ii. 31, *His soul was not left in hell.* John xii. 27, *Now is my soul troubled.* Matt. xxvi. 38, *My soul is exceeding sorrowful.* Luke x. 21, *Jesus rejoiced in spirit.* John xi. 33, and xiii. 21, *Jesus was troubled in spirit.* Now since we have the human soul or spirit of Christ mentioned several times in Scripture on other occasions, and yet never once mentioned

with relation to his incarnation, but always find his coming into our world described by *taking flesh and blood, body*, the *fashion of a man*, the *likeness of sinful flesh, &c.* there is much reason to suppose that Christ had a human soul before, and did not then begin to have it.

Argument IV. "Though the Jews were much at a loss in our Saviour's time in their sentiments of the Messiah, and had very various and confused notions of him, yet it is certain that amongst many of the learned of that nation, and probably amongst many of the vulgar too, there was a tradition of the pre-existence of the soul of the Messiah." Philo the Jew, who lived very near the time of our Saviour, interprets several of those Scriptures of the Old Testament concerning the Mediator or *Logos* which we do: He calls him *the Son of God*, and yet he makes him expressly *a man*, the *prince of the angels*, the *prophet of God*, the *light of the people;* and though he talks with some confusion on this subject, and gives him some such characters as seem to make this *Logos* truly divine, and one with God, yet other characters also are such as seem to be inferior to godhead, and very happily agree with this doctrine of the pre-existent soul of Christ in union with his divine nature, as will plainly appear in what follows.

In some parts of his works, Philo describes the *Logos* as a particular divine power, δύναμις, which he also calls σοφία, or *wisdom*, as Solomon does in the eighth of *Proverbs*, and he attributes to this wisdom, or word, an existence before any creature, the contrivance of the creation of the world and all things in it, with other divine and incommunicable ascriptions. Sometimes the ancient Jews make it the same with God himself; so the Targums do, which are Jewish commentaries upon Scripture, when they speak of the *memra*, or word, thereby representing either divine powers or properties in a personal manner, or the divine nature itself in a particular manner of agency, relation, or subsistence.

In other places, Philo makes the *Logos*, or Word, to signify that glorious archangel which the ancient Jews suppose to be the supreme of creatures, formed before all the angels and all the other parts of the creation, "in whom was the name of God," who was sent to conduct Moses and the Jews into Canaan; *Exod.* xxiii. 20. This glorious spirit Philo calls "the most honourable *Logos*, the archangel, prince of the angels and stars, high-priest in this temple of God, the world, who stands in the limits between the creature and the Creator, the eldest, the first-begotten of the sons of God, who under God governs the world, and who doth humbly mediate for us mortals with him that is immortal."

The seventy Jewish interpreters seem to have had some notion that this archangel was the Messiah, when they call the *child born*, the *Son given*, in *Isaiah* ix. 6, Μεγάλης βουλῆς Ἄγγελος, *the angel of the great counsel*, even as Christ is called an *angel*, Isaiah lxiii. 9. Mal. iii. 1. Exod. xxiii. 20. And it was a general opinion of the ancient Jews, that there was one glorious angel, superior to all the rest, by whom God made his visits to the patriarchs, and declared his will to Abraham, Jacob, Moses, Joshua, &c.

I confess, these ancient Jews speak variously, and with some darkness and confusion on these subjects, that we cannot gather any steady or certain inferences that they generally believed either of these two *Logos's* to be the very person of their expected Messiah: Yet a Christian, who has the clearer light of the New Testament, may from their writings easily and naturally trace and infer the doctrine of the uncreated *Logos*, that is, the divine Word, or wisdom, united to the created *Logos*, that is, the great

archangel, because these ancient Jews ascribe to the *Logos* so many things which are truly divine, and so many things inferior to divinity.

But they speak in some confusion, because they seem not to have had a clear idea of this personal union between God and a creature. Whereas Christians being instructed in this doctrine by the New Testament, may clearly understand how by this glorious being, this complex person, *viz.* our Lord Jesus Christ, God created the world, and God governed the affairs of his ancient church: And that standing in the limits between God and the creature, both by his nature as well as his office, he becomes the high-priest, and mediates between mortal men and God who is immortal, according to the language of the ancient Jews.

What I have cited already, discovers the acknowledged sense and opinion of the ancient Jews, both philosophers and commentators, on this subject. See much more to this purpose in my *Dissertation on the Logos, or Word of God*, pages 423—465.

If we search among other of the jewish writers, we may find more intimations of this doctrine.

Bishop Fowler cites some notable traditions of the jewish rabbies to this purpose; one in an ancient book amongst the Jews, called *Pesikta, viz.* That "after God had created the world, he put his hand under the throne of his glory, and brought out the soul of the Messiah, with all his attendants, and said unto him, Wilt thou heal and redeem my sons after six thousand years? He answered, I am willing so to do. Again therefore, said God unto him, And art thou willing to suffer chastisements, for the purging away their iniquities? And the soul of the Messiah answered, I will suffer them, and that with all my heart."

"And there is," saith he, "a cabbalistical representation of their expected Messiah's being in heaven, in another old book of high esteem among the Jews, intitled, *Midrash Conen, viz.* 'In the fifth house sits the Messiah, Son of David; and Elias of blessed memory said to this Messiah, Bear the stroke and judgment of the Lord, which he inflicts on thee for the sin of Israel, as it is written by Isaiah, he was wounded because of our transgressions,' &c." Now though we allow no more credit to these traditions than to other jewish tales, yet it discovers their ancient notion of the pre-existence of the soul of the Messiah: And the learned Mr. Fleming tells us, that it was an inducement to him to favour that opinion, "because the Jews seemed to have laid down this as an undoubted maxim in all ages, that the soul of the Messiah was made before all creatures, as all must own that are in the least acquainted with their opinions and writings." *Christology*, Book III. Chapter V. page 457. That this was an ancient opinion of the Jews is confirmed by other writers also.

And it is no wonder if many of the common people, as well as the learned, had also this notion of the soul of Christ, since it appears, *John* ix. 2, that they had a belief of the pre-existence of all human souls, for which opinion I think there is neither in Scripture nor in reason any just foundation; nor doth the pre-existence of the soul of Christ at all infer the doctrine of the pre-existence of other souls, but rather the contrary, as will appear under the next particular.

Argument V. "Since it pleased the Father to prepare a body for our Lord Jesus Christ, by the overshadowing of the Holy Ghost, and by a peculiar manner of conception, that his body might have some peculiar prerogative, and that he might be *the Son of God* in a superior sense with regard to his flesh, as *Luke* i. 35; so it is not unreasonable to

suppose that the soul of Christ also, which was to be united to godhead, should have this peculiar prerogative, to be derived immediately from God before any creature was made, and to enjoy this union with the divine nature, and glories suitable thereto, before its union with an earthly body." And thus, in consideration of its formation before all creatures in a most immediate manner by the will of God, as well as its nearest resemblance to God himself above all other spirits, this human soul might be called also *the Son of God* and his *only-begotten Son*, in a transcendent manner above all other beings, whether men or angels, who are sometimes called *sons of God*. But this thought perhaps will be set in a clearer light, when we come to explain a variety of Scriptures, according to this hypothesis, in the next Section; and it may be yet made plainer still, whensoever I shall publish another dissertation which I have written, *On the Name, Son of God*.* See pages 520—529.

SECTION V.

A CONFIRMATION OF THIS DOCTRINE BY ARGUMENTS DRAWN FROM THE HAPPY CONSEQUENCES, AND THE VARIOUS ADVANTAGES OF IT.

I THINK the reason and considerations mentioned in the two foregoing Sections have some weight in them: But the argument will receive new strength, if we survey the various advantages that attend this opinion of the pre-existent soul of Christ.

Advantage I. "This doctrine casts a surprising light upon many dark passages in the word of God; it does very naturally and easily explain and reconcile several difficult places both of the Old and New Testament, which are very hard to be accounted for any other way." Some of these I have already mentioned, and I think they appear in a fairer light by the help of this doctrine. Other passages there are which speak of Christ as the true God, and yet at the same time, in the context attribute such properties and characters to him, as are very hard to be reconciled and applied to pure godhead; but are explained with utmost ease to us, and honour to Christ, by supposing his pre-existent soul even then united to his divine nature.

Let us survey some of these portions of Scripture:

Text I. *Col.* i. 15—19, Christ is described as *the—image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature; for by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, &c. All things were created by him and for him; and he is before all things, and by him all things consist; and he is the head of the body, the church; the beginning, the first-born from the dead; that in all things he might have the pre-eminence; for it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell;* or, as it is expressed in the second chapter, verse 9, *for in him dwelleth all the fulness of the godhead bodily.* Here are some expressions which seem too sublime for any mere creature, *viz. All things were created by him, and for him*, and *by him all things consist.* But when it is said he is *the image of the invisible God;* this cannot refer merely to his divine nature, for that is as invisible in the Son as it is in the Father; therefore it seems to refer to his pre-existent soul in union with his godhead, who is the brightest, the fairest, and most glorious image of God; and so he appears to the world of angels in heaven,

* This Dissertation was never published.

and by his frequently assuming a visible shape heretofore, became the image of the invisible God to men, and dwelt here for a season on earth.

He is said to be *the first-born of every creature.* There has been much labour and art of criticism employed to apply these words merely to the divine nature of Christ, by giving them a metaphorical or some unusual sense: But if we suppose this soul of Christ to exist thus early, then he is properly the first-born of every creature in the literal sense of the words; and in this sense he may be literally called *the beginning of the creation of God,* as he styles himself, *Rev.* iii. 14.

If we join the expressions of the first and second chapters to the Colossians together, we may explain the one by the other: "He is the image of the invisible God; by him and for him were all things created, and in him all things consist, that in all things he might have the pre-eminence, &c. for it pleased the Father that in him should dwell all the fulness of the godhead bodily." All the godhead dwelt in him as a spirit, or spiritually before the incarnation, and bodily since; thus the nineteenth verse of the first chapter comes in properly as a reason for all those attributions, both supreme and inferior, *viz.* "because God was pleased to ordain that the divine nature should be united to this glorious being, the human soul of Christ, now appearing in a body."

Dr. Thomas Goodwin was a learned, a laborious, and a successful inquirer into all those Scriptures that treat of our Lord Jesus Christ, in order to aggrandize his character; and when he interprets these verses in Volume II. *Of the knowledge of God, &c.* he finds himself constrained to explain the expressions concerning the divine nature of Christ, as united to man, by way of anticipation, or as considered in its future union with the man Jesus, and argues strongly for this exposition: But there is no need to bring in such a figure as prolepsis, or the anticipation of things future, since the real and actual existence of the soul of Christ before the creation makes all this language of Scripture just and plain in the literal sense. And what that pious and ingenious author declares upon this subject almost persuades me to believe that had he lived in our day, he would have been a hearty defender of the doctrine which I propose.

Text II. The next Scripture I shall cite for this purpose, is that illustrious description of our Lord Jesus, in the first chapter of the *Epistle to the Hebrews,* wherein there are sufficient evidences of his divine nature: But there are some such expressions as seem to imply also a nature inferior and dependent. He is represented as "laying the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of his hands; he upholds all things by the word of his power;" which expressions carry in them an idea too sublime for any mere created nature. And the citation of the first of them from the hundred and second *Psalm,* proves yet farther that Christ is Jehovah, the Creator.

But when he is called a *Son,* a *begotten Son,* this seems to imply derivation and dependency: And perhaps the sonship of Christ, and his being the *only-begotten of the Father,* may be better explained by attributing it to his human soul existing by some peculiar and immediate manner of creation, formation, or derivation from the Father, before other creatures were formed; especially if we include in the same idea of sonship, as Doctor Goodwin does, his union to the divine nature, and if we add also his exaltation to the office of the Messiah as King and *Lord of all;* which some zealous trinitarians suppose to be the chief thing meant, when God saith, verse 5, *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.*

Now this matter being set in a fair and full light, and established by just arguments from Scripture, would take off the force of many arian pretences against the Trinity, *viz.* such pretences as arise from the supposed derivation of one person from another in pure godhead, and a supposed eternal act of generation producing a co-essential son; which things are not plainly expressed in any part of the Bible, and which are acknowledged on all sides to be great and incomprehensible difficulties.

Heb. i. 3, perhaps these words, *the brightness of his* Father's *glory, and the express image of his person*, may be better explained, if we suppose the divine nature of Christ to be united to his pre-existent soul, when it was first created: This human soul of Christ was then like a glass, through which the godhead shone with inimitable splendour, in all the perfections of it, wisdom, power, holiness, and goodness; thus Christ was his Father's most perfect *image*, or copy, both in his own native excellencies, bearing the nearest resemblance to God as an *only-begotten Son*, and he was also *the brightness of his glory;* because the perfections of the Father shone through him with more illustrious rays than it was possible for any mere creature to represent or transmit them, who was not thus united to a divine nature.

I cannot forbear to illustrate this by a similitude, which I think has been somewhere used by Doctor Goodwin: Suppose it possible for a hollow globe of crystal to be made so vast as to enclose the sun; this globe of crystal, considered in itself, would have many properties in it, perhaps, resembling the sun in a more perfect manner than any other being; but if it were also inhabited by the sun itself, and thus transmitted the glories of the sun to men, how express an image would it be of that bright luminary; and would it not be the most happy medium by which the sun could exert its powers of light and heat? Such is Jesus *the man*, who is *the Son of God* inhabited by the divine nature, and the fairest image of God.

Besides, let it be yet further considered, that when Christ is called, in Coloss. i. 15, *the image of the invisible God*, and in Heb. i. 3, *the express image of his* Father's *person*, it must be understood either of his divine nature or his human. If it be understood of his divine nature, it must mean that he is the image of the Father's essence, or of his personality; for the personality together with the essence, make up the complete character of God the Father.

But the divine nature of Christ cannot properly be the image of his Father's nature or essence; for the essence of godhead, or the divine nature, both in the Father and in the Son, is one and the same individual nature or essence, which cannot properly be the image of itself; nor can the same individual essence be both the original and the image at the same time. When we conceive of the self-same body, or the self-same man, or the self-same angel, in different positions or situations, circumstances, relations, or appearances, we never say that the self-same thing is the image of itself. Thus Christ in his divine essence cannot be the image of the Father's essence, when it is the same individual essence with that of the Father. The essence of God in the person of the Son cannot properly be the image of that essence in the person of the Father, since it is the same individual essence.

Nor is Christ in his divine nature an express image of the personality of the Father. Sonship is no image of paternity: A derived property or subsistence is no image of an underived property or subsistence, but just the reverse, or directly contrary to it.

Since therefore Christ in his divine nature is neither the image of his Father's essence,

nor of his Father's personality, these words must be spoken with regard to Christ's human nature; and in this respect he is the express image of his Father, or the image of the invisible God; and that, these three ways:

1. As the human soul of Christ is a creature, which has the nearest likeness to its Creator. This Son of God is a most glorious Spirit, the brightest and nearest image to the Father, the eternal glorious Spirit; far nearer than the angels who are also the sons of God, or than Adam who was the son of God too; for his properties and perfections are much greater than their's, and bear a much nearer resemblance to the properties and perfections of God the Father.

2. The human nature of Christ is the image of the invisible God the Father, as he often assumed a visible form under the Old Testament, and appeared, and spake, and acted as God in a visible glory; and so he is the proper *image of the invisible God*, Col. i. 15.

3. As he took upon him, in the fulness of time, a visible body of flesh and blood, and therein appeared as one in whom the fulness of the godhead dwelt bodily, the visible image of his invisible Father.

But I proceed. The holy writer, in *Heb.* i. 2, adds further, that he was *appointed heir of all things*, which seems to be not so applicable to the pure godhead of Christ; for godhead has an original and eternal right to all things, and does not come at it by way of inheritance or derivation, much less by being an appointed heir. Doctor Goodwin is so well persuaded of the sense of these words, that they are not properly applicable to pure godhead, that he again supposes the holy writer to speak by way of anticipation, and to view the divine nature of Christ in union with the man, though he acknowledges the things which are now spoken of, were transacted before the world was.

There are other expressions in this chapter, which seem to refer to some being inferior to godhead. Verse 4, *Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.* Verse 9, *Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows;* that is, has given thee the Holy Spirit as a comforter, in a superior measure. These things cannot be supposed to be spoken of the godhead of Christ: And yet they seem to be spoken concerning Christ before his incarnation, and then they point out to us the pre-existence of his human soul: Whereas, if they are spoken of him after his incarnation, then they prove nothing of his pre-existent glory, which seems to be the design of this chapter.

Since the design of the second chapter to the *Hebrews* is, to prove the incarnation of Christ, and his taking upon him a human body, I might here ask, whether the design of the first chapter may not be to represent our blessed Lord in his pre-existent state, both divine and human, that is, to set forth the glory of this human spirit both in its own excellencies and in its original union with the divine nature. And this appears the more probable, because the author in the first chapter is frequently comparing him with angels, and sets him above them in several comparisons; now this would be but a low and diminutive account of the godhead of Christ, to raise him above angels; but it is a glorious and sublime account of his human soul, considered as united to godhead, and *one with God.*

And since there are so many expressions in the first chapter, which ascribe ideas to

Christ which are inferior to godhead, as well as some sublimer expressions which appear incommunicable to any but God; I would inquire whether the introduction of this pre-existent soul of Christ here, may not be a happy clew to lead us into the very mind and meaning of this portion of Scripture, rather than to suppose the godhead of Christ is always intended here: For by so doing we embarrass ourselves with this difficulty, which the arians frequently fling upon us, of attributing something derivative and dependent to the divine nature, and ascribing something too low and mean to the godhead of Christ.

I might add also, in confirmation of this thought, that had the sacred writer's only design been to prove the divine nature of Christ, there are several passages in the Old Testament which are of equal force and significancy with any which he has cited, and which are more evidently applied to the Messiah by the prophets themselves: But if we suppose him to speak of the whole pre-existent glory of Christ, then the citations seem to be well chosen and well mingled to represent his two natures, both divine and human, and the glory of his sacred person resulting thence.

That noble expositor on the *Epistle to the Hebrews*, Dr. Owen, being sensible that all these expressions in this chapter can never be applied to the divine nature of Christ, asserts, that, "it is not the direct and immediate design of the apostle in this place to treat absolutely of either nature of Christ, either divine or human, but only of his person: And though some things here expressed belong to his divine nature, some to his human; yet none of them are spoken as such, but are all considered as belonging to his person." See his *Exposition on the Hebrews*, verse 3, page 52. So that I have those two excellent writers, Dr. Goodwin and Dr. Owen, concurring with me in this sentiment, that it is not the prime design of this first chapter to the Hebrews to prove the deity of Christ, but the glory of his person considered as God-man: And in this view several expressions of the apostle are most appositely adapted to represent the glory of the human soul of Christ in its pre-existent state, and in its union to the divine nature.

Text III. Another difficult Scripture, which is made more easy and plain by this doctrine, is the eighth of *Proverbs*, verses. 22, &c. where wisdom is represented as "brought forth, and dwelling with God before the world was." May not this be happily attributed to Christ's pre-existent soul united to the divine nature, or the person of the Mediator God-man? For it is said, *the Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old; I was set up from everlasting.—Before the hills, was I brought forth—I was by him—and was daily his delight.* These words admit of two or three remarks:

1. These expressions, "I was possessed or acquired, I was set up, I was brought forth," seem to express and imply something inferior to pure godhead, which is underived and independent; yet it seems to be the proper description of a being distinct from God the Father in the literal sense,* for these words intimate so much: *I was by him as*

* I readily grant the divine wisdom may be here represented, after the manner of the eastern writers, as the counsel, contrivance, and the decretive power or will of God, in a personal character, as being present with God in the creation of the world, and as produced or brought forth by him: But even this wisdom may be supposed to make the pre-existent soul of Christ, in some unknown manner, its instrument of operation, as Doctor Goodwin uses the word; and when the sacred writer adds, "I rejoiced daily before him in the habitable parts of his earth, and my delights were with the sons of men," this seems to cast a stronger aspect upon some real proper person, distinct from godhead.

one brought up with him. I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him—and my delights were with the sons of men. If these things be taken literally, they mean a real person, inferior and distinct from God.

2. The original Hebrew does not say, *the Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way*, but קנני *acquired*, or *assumed*, or *possessed me the beginning of his ways*, not ברשית but רשית which gives a fair ground for this interpretation, *viz.* that the divine nature acquired, assumed, or possessed himself of the human soul of Christ, as the beginning, head, and foundation, of all his works and ways, both of creation and providence: So *Rev.* iii. 14, Christ is called *the beginning* or head *of the creation of God.*

Mr. Fleming citing these verses at large, *Christology*, Book III. Chapter V. page 469, adds, "What we render in verses 24 and 25, *brought forth*, the Targum renders by being *born* in the first verse, and by being *created* in the next. But the Hebrew word is the same in both, and is justly rendered by Arias Montanos, *formata*, that is, *framed, formed*, or *made:* As the Septuagint, to the same purpose, renders it by ποιῆσαι, which is of the same import. And what else can he mean, when, in verse 30, he represents himself 'as one brought up with God,' or, as the Targum says, 'as one nourished up at his side?' Surely, if this be meant of the first-created spirit, who is now the soul of the Messiah, no expressions can be more plain as well as natural: Whereas if we understand them immediately of the *Logos*, as the second person of the Trinity, we must get over abundance of figures, that can never, I think, be properly either explained or accommodated; besides our being involved in endless criticisms about words."

Dr. Goodwin also is positive that these expressions cannot refer to the second person considered in his eternal generation, but they must be referred to Christ as God-man, because they denote an act of the divine will. Goodwin *of the Knowledge of God*, Volume II. pages 111 and 189.

The learned Dr. Knight supposes this birth of divine wisdom is her coming forth into a human figure and subsistence, or her entrance into the substance of the first-created nature, that is, the human soul of Jesus Christ, at the moment of its creation. By this means the Word, as man, became the head of mankind, who were to be made by him after his image and likeness; and as the first-begotten, he had the right of primogeniture or government over the rest.—See his *Considerations on Mr. Whiston, &c.* pages 108, 109, &c.

3. I remark also, that though the Hebrew language may express the eternity of God, by saying, *Before the mountains and the hills, &c.* yet since we suppose the soul of Christ to be the first of the works or ways of God, this manner of expression may more particularly and expressly describe the date of his existence before this world was made, though it be not coeval and co-eternal with the godhead. But I proceed,

4. To mention some other difficult texts, which may derive light from this doctrine.

If we can but suffer ourselves to believe, what I have intimated before, that the sonship of Christ does not belong to his divine nature, but rather to his human soul considered in its original derivation from God the Father, and in its being appointed to the sacred office of the Messiah; then we have a most evident and obvious interpretation of those Scriptures in the New Testament, which have been attended with so much darkness and difficulty, and have given so much anxiety and pains to our divines, *viz.* John v. 19, *The Son can do nothing of himself.* Matt. xxiv. 36. Mark xiii. 32, *But of that*

day and that hour, knoweth no man, no not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father. Heb. v. 8, *Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience, by the things which he suffered.* Now this sonship refers to verse 5, *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.* 1 Cor. xv. 28, *Then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.* These expressions sound very harsh if applied to the divine nature of Christ, but are very naturally applicable to a being or spirit inferior to godhead.

To these expressions I might add John xiv. 28, *My Father is greater than I;* which is very hard to apply to the divine nature of Christ, and to make a greater and lesser God: And yet it seems but a poor low assertion, if our Saviour spoke of it himself as a mere common man, who begun to exist thirty-four years ago: It was no strange thing that God should be greater than a man. But if we suppose it refers to Christ's glorious human soul, which was the *first-born of every creature,* it carries in it something grand and august, and he pays hereby a sublimer honour to God his Father.

All other places of Scripture wherein the Son of God is represented, either as receiving or invested with sublime powers from God, or as bearing any inferior characters, have a most natural and easy explication, if they are applied to this glorious human spirit, sometimes considered as distinguished from the divine nature, sometimes as personally united to it, and that either in its own existence before its incarnation, or in its incarnate state, according as the context requires: For since both natures have their part and share in man's redemption, they are thus distinguished in the holy Scripture; some expressions relating more properly to the one nature, some to the other, and some including both natures united. There is no need of paraphrasing these Scriptures at large, and giving an example how these texts may then be interpreted, since this key being given, the way lies open for every unlearned Christian to penetrate into the sense of them, and to explain many other Scriptures besides those I have cited, by the help of the same doctrine.

Advantage II. "This doctrine of the pre-existence of the soul of Christ, not only explains dark and difficult Scriptures, but it discovers to us many beauties and proprieties of expression in the word of God, and casts a lustre upon some of those passages, whose justness and beauty were not before observed." Let me mention a few of them:

1. When man is said to be created *in the image of God,* Gen. i. 27, it may refer to the God-man, to Christ in his pre-existent state. God says, *Let us make man in our image, after our likeness:* The word is redoubled, perhaps, to intimate that Adam was made in the likeness of the human soul of Christ, who was the first of God's creation, as well as that he bore something of the image or resemblance of the divine nature itself: And hereby Christ has the honour of being set up as the first and fairest image of God, and the grand pattern of all human souls, who were to bear his likeness.

2. Again, when God is said to grieve, to repent, to be angry, to come down from heaven, to stand, to speak, to receive, and assume to himself many of the actions and passions of human nature, we are wont to explain them as mere figures of speech, employing human expressions to represent divine actions: But if we suppose the divine nature of Christ united to this pre-existent soul, then these expressions, perhaps, may be taken in a more literal sense than we imagined; when he that was true God, by virtue of this union, came down from heaven, stood, spake, grieved, rejoiced, and was pleased, or

angry, at the view he took of the affairs of men. Doctor Owen, in his *Meditations on the Glory of Christ*, asserts, that "it had been absurd to bring in God under perpetual anthropopathies, as grieving, repenting, being angry, well pleased, and the like, were it not but that the divine person intended was to take on him the nature wherein such affections do dwell."

3. And not only human actions are attributed to God, but even the very name of *man* is given to that glorious being which visited the patriarchs of old: He assumed a human shape, and appeared as a man; and even the soul itself might be so called by synecdoche, which puts a part for the whole. And yet this glorious appearance is also called *God*, and *the Lord* or *Jehovah*. It was *a man* that wrestled with Jacob, *Gen.* xxxi. 24, and yet he is acknowledged and adored as *God*. That extraordinary man, who is called *the man of God*, when he appeared to Manoah, *Judges* xiii. is supposed to be the Messiah: His countenance is described *like the countenance of an angel of God*, and his name is called *secret* or *wonderful*, verses 6 and 18.* So in Ezekiel's vision, chapter i. 26, *upon the likeness of the throne was the appearance of a man above:* And in the prophecy of Daniel, we meet with several of his appearances in the form of a man: Chapter iii. 25, the fourth *man* walking in the midst of the burning fiery furnace, was *like the Son of God.* So chapter viii. verses 15, 16, *there stood before me as the appearance of a man;* and this *man* bid Gabriel make Daniel understand the vision: And chapter x. 5, *a certain man clothed in linen, whose loins were girded with gold*, is described very nearly in the same form and dress as Christ appeared in to St. John, *Rev.* i. 13; and Dan. viii. 13, *One like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, &c.* which is parallel to *Rev.* i. 7. It is possible that most times when the *angel*, who is also called *God*, favoured the patriarchs with a visit, he appeared in the form of a *man;* thus the great *Theanthropos*, or *God-man*, put on a human shape frequently, as a preludium, figure, and prophecy, of his own incarnation.

Nor can it be objected here, that a human soul is not a man; for surely it may be called *a man*, as well as Christ may be called *an angel*, as he is often in Scripture; and better than the pure divine nature may be called *a man;* which yet is the sense of those who will not allow Christ's human soul to be here meant. The soul is the chief part of the man, and St. Paul calls his own soul by this name, *viz.* a man. See 2 Cor. xii. 2, 3, *I knew a man*, that is, his soul, *whether in the body—or out of the body, I cannot tell.*

4. Another instance of the justness and beauty of scriptural language we find in *Zech.* xiii. 7, where the man Christ is called the *neighbour of God*, or the *man who is near to him*, as it may be rendered: *Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow*, or neighbour, *saith the Lord of hosts.* The word עמיתי which we render *my fellow*, does never signify any sort of equality, but conjunction, nearness, or neighbourhood: It is often rendered *neighbour* in Scripture. It denotes the man that was with God, or near to God, by the intimate union of the human soul to the godhead, and was the shepherd of the flock of God, or the keeper of Israel, in all former ages. So the vulgar Latin renders it, *cohærentem mihi*, "cleaving to me;" and because of the union between the divine and human nature, it may be very properly expressed, *my neighbour.*

* It is the same word, פלא *wonderful*, which is attributed to Christ as one of his names, in *Isaiah* ix. 6, which the angel here assumes, when Manoah asks his name.

I might take occasion here to remark also how appositely God himself is sometimes called the *Shepherd of Israel*, Psalm xxiii. 1, and lxxx. 1. *He shall feed his flock like a shepherd; he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom*, Isaiah xl. 11; which is a prophecy of Christ, though he is called *the Lord* God in the foregoing verse. This language has great propriety in it when we consider the human soul of Christ united to godhead, acting the part of a shepherd towards the jewish nation, "leading them through the wilderness like a flock," and watching over them as a shepherd in the land of Canaan. How beautiful is this idea, when we observe that both in prophecy and in history, in the Old Testament and in the New, this office is appropriated to Christ; Ezek. xxxiv. 23, *I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David.* John x. 14, Jesus calls himself *the good shepherd;* and St. Peter echoes to the voice of Christ, and calls him *the chief shepherd*, and the *bishop of souls*, 1 Peter ii. 25, and v. 4.

This seems to carry something of evidence with it, that the human soul of Christ had an existence before; and therefore the Scripture was careful to use human language, to express his offices as well as his person and actions. This will further appear by what follows:

5. This doctrine of the pre-existence of the human soul of Christ, affords us a plain reason why he is called Christ, or the Messiah, in those many places of Scripture, which represent transactions before his incarnation, to shew that this very person was anointed to his offices of old. So in 1 Cor. x. 9, *Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them*, that is, Israelites, *tempted* him, *and were destroyed.* Ephes. iii. 9, *God created all things by Jesus Christ.* 2 Tim. i. 9, *Grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.* 1 Peter i. 11, *Searching what manner of time the Spirit of Christ, which was in them*, the prophets, *did signify, when it testified beforehand, the sufferings of Christ.* 1 Peter iii. 19, *By which also he*, that is Christ, *went and preached unto the spirits in prison, which were disobedient—in the days of Noah. Heb.* xi. 26, Moses esteemed *the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt.* The word *Christ*, which is the same with *Messiah* or *anointed*, implies a complexion of the divine and human nature; at least, it seems to import his human nature in an especial manner; *for there is one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus*, 1 Tim. ii. 5. The manhood is eminently represented in the person of the Mediator, though the godhead being united, rendered all his actions infinitely efficacious and powerful.

6. It presents us also with a fair and rational account why God himself was called *the king of Israel*, and took upon him the political government of that peculiar nation; and we learn why the Messiah had also this title given him, *the King of the Jews*, when we consider the pre-existent soul of the Messiah personally united to the divine nature. That God was often called *the king of Israel*, is sufficiently manifest in many places: 1 *Sam.* xii. 12, Samuel reproved them when they wanted another king to reign over them, "while the Lord their God was their king." David and Isaiah often called God the *Creator of Israel* and their *king*, the *Redeemer of Jacob* and his *king*, the *Holy One of Israel* and his *king;* Psalm lxxxix. 18. *Isaiah* xli. 21. *Isaiah* xliii. 15. And in the vision of Isaiah, chapter vi. verse 5, the prophet says, *Mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts;* which is properly applied to Christ by John the Evangelist, chapter xii. verse 41. He is called *the King of glory*, Psalm xxiv. 7, 9, 10. When the ark was brought up to Zion, he is intitled the "King of Zion," *Zech.* ix. 9;

which is attributed to Christ, *John* xii. 25; and the common name of the Messiah was *the King of Israel;* John i. 49, *Nathanael said to* Christ, *Thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Israel.* All these expressions are very natural, and just, and proper, when we consider the soul of Christ in its pre-existent state, united to the divine nature, and becoming a patron and protector of the holy seed, assuming the Jews, above any other nation, into a peculiar relation to himself. And upon this account it is said, in John i. 11, *He came unto his own,* εἰς τὰ ἴδια, "to his own property or possession, to his own people, the Jews," *but* the Jews, *his own* subjects, *received him not.*

Now if we suppose the soul of our blessed Redeemer in union with his godhead, to be the appointed or anointed king of the jewish church and nation, through all the ages of that economy, and if we consider, that when he took flesh upon him and came down to dwell in the midst of them, according to the prophecies of the Old Testament, he was renounced, disowned, scorned, reproached, scourged, and crucified, by his rebellious subjects; and when we remember that all these sorrows were sustained in obedience to the will of his heavenly Father, and in compassion to sinful man; how just and meritorious a foundation does this lay for his exaltation to a greater and more extensive kingdom, even to be raised to the government of all churches and all nations! He was *King of the Jews* for many ages before he came in the flesh; and when he rose from the dead, he became "King of the gentiles, and Lord of all things in heaven and earth," as a reward of his sufferings; *Phil.* ii. 8—11. God at first "set his King of Israel on his holy hill of Zion," *Psalm* ii. 6; and when he had declared him to be his Son at his resurrection, he says, *Ask of me, and I will give thee, &c.* So at his request he "gave him the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost ends of the earth for his possession;" *Psalm* ii. 8. He was of old the *King of Jacob,* and when he had *washed us from our sins in his own blood,* and became *the first-begotten from the dead,* he had then a *new name* given him, *King of kings, and Lord of lords,* and *Prince of the kings of the earth;* see *Rev.* i. 5, and xix. 16. And though some of these titles are divine, and belong to the divine nature of Christ originally, yet here they are ascribed to him as *God manifest in the flesh,* or as a man united to God; nor are they too high for that whole person who was God as well as man. Besides, when his human nature had suffered, it was then exalted to a greater participation of, or a nearer resemblance to divine honours than before.

Let us dwell a little longer on this sacred subject, the enlargement of the kingdom of Christ.

Is there not some ground from Scripture to believe that the great God governs the world by the intervening agency and ministration of good and evil angels? As his Son Jesus Christ was *King of the Jews,* so the good angels were specially employed under Christ to do good offices for his people. And may we not suppose that the gentile countries, those sinful nations of the earth, were distributed by divine providence, under the dominion or government of several evil angels in the times of God's ancient dispensation, before the coming of Christ? Is there not reason to think that the heathen nations, for their abominable iniquities, might be so far judicially abandoned of God, as to be left very much under the dominion, possession, and power of evil angels, since they *sacrificed unto devils,* Deut. xxxii. 17. 1 Cor. x. 20. "And chose devils for their

gods?" *Baalzebub* is the known *god of Ekron*, 2 Kings i. 2, 3; who is called *the prince of the devils*, Matt. xii. 24. And other names of the gods of the gentiles, are probably the names that several devils might assume to themselves, and teach the gentiles to worship them under those names. And since Satan is called *the god of this world*, 2 Cor. iv. 4, that is, the being whom the heathen world worshipped, and since he is called *the prince of this world*, John xii. 31, and xiv. 30, that is, he whom the heathen and sinful part of mankind obeyed, may not evil angels be those *principalities and powers*, those *spiritual wickednesses in high places*, Ephes. vi. 12, who are the *rulers of the darkness of this world*, that is, of the dark and miserable heathen world?

Do not the *princes of Persia and Græcia* seem to be such evil angels, *Dan.* x. 13? For the prince of Persia withstood that glorious person, whom I take to be the angel Gabriel, who talked with Daniel, for one-and-twenty days, when Michael the archangel helped him. And when this glorious person returned from Daniel, he went *to fight with the prince of Persia*, verse 20; therefore the prince of Persia could not be a good angel. And it appears yet further, that all these angel-princes of the nations were evil angels, because none of them held with this glorious person, that is, with Gabriel, none besides *Michael your prince*, that is, the angel-governor of Israel.

Though the heathen nations were left under the dominion of evil angels, yet since Israel was God's peculiar people, may we not reasonably suppose God set a good angel over them to be a prince, even his own Son in his pre-existent nature, who was "the angel of the covenant," *Mal.* iii. 1, and the "angel of God's presence," *Isaiah* lxiii. 9, and the "angel in whom his name was," *Exod.* xxiii. 25: And may not Christ himself be this "Michael the archangel, the prince of Israel?" It has been observed by some writers, that the Scripture never speaks of archangels in the plural number: Perhaps there is but one archangel, and that is Christ.

Observe further, that Christ's kingdom is directly opposite to the devil's kingdom. His grand design is to oppose and destroy the work and power of the devil: And this seems to be Michael's appointed work in Scripture, for he is sometimes brought in as "contending with devils," *Jude*, verse 9, *Rev.* xii. and as he has other angels under him to "fight against the dragon or devil," *verse* 7, so has Christ. And as he is called the "prince of Daniel's people," *Dan.* x. 21, that is, the prince or king of Israel; so is Christ. Observe also, that Michael is called *one*, or rather the FIRST *of the chief princes*, as it is in the margin, *Dan.* x. 13, which is very agreeable to the character of Christ, who is the first and supreme angel-governor, and the prince of Israel, who were God's own kingdom or people.*

Now in this view of things, when we consider our blessed Lord as having his dominion extended *from sea to sea*, and reigning over the gentile nations *even to the ends of the earth*, since his ascension to heaven; may we not justly suppose this is one part of his exaltation, that by him the *prince of this world* should be cast out, that is, turned out, and despoiled of his old dominion among the nations, as well as out of the souls

* Some think the glorious person who appeared and talked with Daniel, *chapter* x. 5, was not Gabriel, but Jesus Christ, because he is described much in the same manner as Christ is described, *Rev.* i. 13—16, in his appearance to John; and if so, then Michael cannot be Christ, but must be his prime minister in the government of Israel. But by comparison of these chapters, it is plain that this glorious person may much better be supposed to be Gabriel, who conversed with Daniel, *chapter* ix. 21, and who is there called *the man Gabriel, whom he had seen in the vision at the beginning*, which probably refers to the vision of the man Gabriel, in *Dan.* viii. 15; and then Michael the archangel must be Christ, the king or prince of Israel.

of men, according to *John* xii. 31? And that all these evil angels, who by divine permission were formerly governors of heathen kingdoms, were then captivated, spoiled, and dispossessed of their government, and made slaves to the sovereign will of Christ? Is there not reason to conceive that these are the *principalities and powers* which he *spoiled* of their dominion, and *made a show of them openly* to the invisible world, *triumphing over them?* Col. ii. 15.* Is not this the *captivity* which *he led captive,* when he *ascended on high—far above all heavens, that he might fill all things,* that is, with his influence, and so might govern all nations? *Ephes.* iv. 8, 10. Is it not upon this account that he is described in that magnificence of glory, by the prophet David? Psalm lxviii. 17, 18, *The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels. The Lord is among them as in Sinai, in his holy place. Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive, thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them.* Was not this the day of his triumph over Satan and his angels, who had been gods and kings, princes and lords† of the nations, when *thousands of* holy *angels* are represented as *the chariots of God,* attending him in that solemnity? Then he "led captive a great captivity," even those *principalities and powers* that had been the *rulers of the darkness of the* heathen *world:* Then *he received gifts for men,* and that not only for his ancient subjects the Jews, but *for the rebellious* gentiles also, who had been the subjects of Satan, "under the power of the devil, led captive by him at his pleasure." And the Psalmist says it was all done with this design, *that the Lord God might dwell among them;* that is, that the heathens might become the people, the kingdom, the habitation, and sanctuary of God, as the nation of the Jews had been before; that Christ, who is God-man, and who was king of the saints, or the holy nation of Israel, might become king of all nations.

Now what a glorious scene of things opens itself to us by this interpretation of a few Scriptures! How naturally and how easily do all things coincide and lead us to this amazing prospect of the victory of Christ over the devil! How illustrious does he appear in this dispossession of evil angels of their dominions on earth, at least so far as to make them become his slaves, and act peculiarly by his permission! How magnificent does this doctrine represent the ascension and exaltation of our blessed Saviour! And how gloriously does the God-man Christ Jesus, who in ancient ages was the *king of Israel,* aggrandize and extend his present title and dominion as *King of nations,* and *Lord of all,* since his death and ascension to heaven!

7. This opinion of the pre-existent soul of Christ is made use of by Doctor Knight,

* See the exposition of this text in the most and the best of our commentators: There is scarcely any thing they say upon it, but is very consistent with the sense I give it in this place, and with the scheme of my discourse.

I confess, Mr. Peirce supposes these *principalities and powers* must mean good angels, whom he believes to have been governors of the gentile nations till Christ's time: And the chief reason he gives for it is, that the Colossians are forbid to worship them, *verse* 18, for they are dispossessed of their government, by the exaltation of Christ; whereas, had they been evil angels, or devils, there would have been no need of forbidding the christian Colossians to worship them.

To this I answer, That these Colossians were but young converts, and might not know that these were evil spirits, whom they were tempted to worship, but only some invisible powers by whom God governed the nations in former times. And let it be observed too, that the apostle, in the course of his argument, excludes all angels from worship, *verses* 10, and 18, 19, and not merely evil angels, *verse* 15.

† The heathen idols, or devils, whom they worshipped, had such names as signify their dominion: Baal and Bel denote *a lord,* Moloch denotes *a king,* Addrammelech and Anammelech denote *kings, &c.*

in his *Primitive Christianity vindicated, against Mr. Whiston*, page 85, to explain those reproofs given to Job by Eliphaz; Job xv. 7, 8, *Art thou the first man that was born? Wast thou made before the hills? Hast thou heard the secret of God? And dost thou restrain wisdom to thyself?* Let us consider each of these four sentences distinctly.

Art thou the first man that was born? Μὴ πρῶτος ἀνθρώπων ἐγεννήθης; "Wast thou born the first of men?" as it is in the Septuagint. Art thou that primitive spirit, "the first-born of the creation?" *Col.* i. 15.

Wast thou made before the hills? Adam was formed after the hills; but this first man, the Messiah, speaking of himself in the person of wisdom, says, *Before the hills was I* born, or *brought forth*, Prov. viii. 25; which in the Hebrew are the very words of Job, applied to the first man, with only a change of the second to the first person: The first man, then, and the divine wisdom, or Messiah, are all one; that is, by the personal union of this first man to the divine word or wisdom.

Hast thou heard the secret of God? The Septuagint add to it, "Did God use thee as a counsellor?" But the Messiah, by way of eminence, is called the *counsellor*, Isaiah ix. 6; in the Septuagint, "the angel of the great counsel;" and perhaps it is he to whom God said, *Let us make man*, Gen. i. 26.

And dost thou restrain wisdom to thyself? Does all divine wisdom dwell in thee? It is only in the Messiah, in the person of Christ, *are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge*, Col. ii. 3. From these interrogatories put to Job, Doctor Knight infers, that "the ancients had a notion of such a wonderful being, such a glorious and first-created human spirit." As for myself, I dare not say, this interpretation carries full and sufficient conviction with it; yet both the sacred penmen of this book, as well as the seventy jewish interpreters, in this passage, may be fairly explained in this manner, and cast no unfavourable aspect on the pre-existence of the soul of Christ.

8. This doctrine, in the judgment of some great authors, gives us a fair idea of those passages of Scripture, wherein God is said to create all things *by Jesus Christ*, Ephes. iii. 9; not merely by his divine nature, but by him considered as God-man, and called by the names Jesus and Christ. This, I confess, has something so sublime in it, that I dare not indulge my own thoughts too far on this subject. Creation is a divine work, and the Scripture always describes it as the prerogative of God to create. Nor can I believe that the real and proper power of forming any thing out of nothing is less than infinite, or that it can be communicated to any creature whatsoever. The lights of nature and Scripture fully agree in making this work an incommunicable prerogative of godhead: Nor can I persuade myself that God would give so much as a shadow of this glory to a mere creature, who was not personally united to God, and thereby became one with God, lest it should too much intrench upon those divine titles, prerogatives, and operations, whereby he distinguishes himself from his creatures. And upon this account I think it is a good proof that Christ is God, because the Scripture joins him with the Father in the work of creation.

Yet there may be some properties and condecencies in it, that when this first-created spirit or soul of Christ was framed, and united to the divine nature, he should not be a mere idle or inactive spectator of the first works of God. But I choose to represent this matter here no further in my own language, but propose it as it is represented by two great divines, Doctor Thomas Goodwin and Mr. Robert Fleming.

Doctor Goodwin, in his *Treatise of the Knowledge of God*, page 177, asserts, That

all things were created by Christ, " he having been some way the instrument, as he is Christ God-man, anointed, of the creation as well as, actually, of redemption." And though the Doctor supposes the human nature to be then united to the godhead only in decree, yet he says, concerning Christ, page 178, " If he were at all to be made a creature, it was his due personal privilege to have been first himself made, and himself to have been God's instrument in creation, and to have uttered those words which were spoken by God, *Let there be light:* But for other ends it was suspended." The same author makes it the title of Chapter XI. page 180, " That Christ as God-man is the Creator of all things, proved by Scripture, *viz.* 1 Cor. viii. 6, *by whom are all things:* John i. 1, 2, 3, *All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.* That the *Logos* or Word connotes the person sustaining before God, the personage of God-man, by whom, as such, all things were created." And he interprets the eighth of *Proverbs* to the same sense.

If it be inquired, How it is possible that the human nature of Christ, even though it be united to the godhead, can have any thing to do in the work of creation? I might give an answer to it out of this author's own words; that is, " Christ might utter those words, *Let there be light;* and as God's word and instrument, might create all things, as he wrought miracles here on earth." Now to speak that word, *Let there be light*, which the almighty power of God attended with divine efficacy, was a most illustrious honour put upon the human nature or soul of Christ; but surely it is not above the power of a creature to speak such a word.

It may be objected, " That no words could be spoken when there was no air to form the sound of a voice;" therefore in the description of Moses, this language is metaphorical, and signifies the act of the will, or a volition that there should be light.

But as the Doctor explains Christ's instrumentality in the creation of the world, by his way of working miracles, this may as well be applied to a volition of the soul, as to a word of the tongue. We may suppose this human spirit might as well will there should be light, as when he cleansed the leper, *Matt.* viii. 3, he said, *I will; be thou clean.* As in that miracle the human soul put forth this volition, and the divine power performed the cure, so in the creation this same glorious spirit might have this honour put on it, as to exert such a volition concerning the several creatures, and the almighty power or godhead, united to it, seconded this volition with its own creative efficacy.

Though the will of this human soul might have no more real influence in causing creatures to exist, than the tongue of Jesus had in curing the leper, yet God may be said to " create all things by Jesus Christ," even as he wrought miracles by him; and Jesus Christ himself also may be properly called the Creator, inasmuch as the divine nature, being personally united to the human soul, performed this work. Now the godhead cannot be said to give away any of its own incommunicable prerogatives to a mere creature by any sublime expressions of this kind, which attribute the creation to Christ, because the soul of Christ is not a mere creature; for by its near and intimate union to the divine nature, it becomes one with God: Which honour is not given to any creature whatsoever, but to *the man Christ Jesus.*

This representation of things, perhaps, may prevent the surprising and offensive ideas which Doctor Goodwin's expressions may raise on a sudden in the minds of those who are affrighted at every sound they have not been accustomed to hear.

Now surely if Christ, considered as God-man, by way of anticipation, or in the

decree of God, be vested with this due dignity, and thus employed in creation, it can never be supposed that the actual existence of his human spirit, at that time in union with his godhead, should impair or diminish the dueness of this privilege: And I am well assured, there is much more evidence in Scripture that his soul was actually the "first-born of the creation," than there is that it was to have been so, and that this right was suspended four thousand years, which is Doctor Goodwin's sense of the matter.

Mr. Fleming, in his *Christology*, Book III. Chap. V. page 451, humbly supposes that the second person of the Trinity was, from all eternity, pitched upon to be the grand organ of all the divine operations, *ad extra:* But since the second person is equally infinite as the Father and Holy Spirit, it is inconceivable that he should be the immediate organ of the production of finite beings, any more than the other persons: Therefore a creature was formed that should have as much of divinity as was possible to be imparted to it; and since the very notion of a creature includes imperfection, when compared with the Creator, therefore this creature was personally united to the Son of God, and by virtue of this union and relation, it has the name and designation of the Son of God. Hence it comes to pass, that sometimes the person of the Son of God is denoted by these names, *Logos, Shechinah, Memra;* at other times this organized creature is represented as the *Son of God:* Then he supposes the angels themselves, as well as Adam, were created by the second person, acting through this glorious creature as an organ, and made after the image of this *shechinah*, or original man, though with various degrees of perfection and resemblance. Thus *God made man in his own likeness.* This was that intelligent being that appeared to angels, to Adam, to Moses, to the three martyrs in the fiery furnace, and he appeared in the same bright figure to the three apostles in the mount of transfiguration.

But, rather than follow these great men all this length, and set my seal to every thing they propose, I choose at present to say, in the words of Mr. Fleming, that "to give a nice or exact adjustment of all these things, may be reserved to Christ, to teach us when we come to heaven." And as I am well assured of the doctrine of the deity of Christ, from many Scriptures, so if there be any thing which I have asserted that runs counter to that doctrine, I desire it to be expunged and forgiven.

Thus I have reckoned up two considerable advantages which may be derived from this doctrine of the pre-existent soul of Christ, *viz.* "That it explains and reconciles many dark and difficult passages of Scripture; and it casts a new lustre upon other texts, whose beauty, justness, and propriety, were not before so much observed." I proceed now to mention some other advantages of it.

Advantage III. Another argument for this doctrine, drawn from the consequences of it, is, that "it does exceedingly aggrandize the personal glory and dignity of our Lord Jesus Christ," of whom we can never have too high an esteem, while we keep within the bounds of Scripture.

This supposition admits and confirms all the honours paid him by other hypotheses, and adds yet other honours to him. It allows him all the supreme dignity and perfection of the divine nature, and the titles and attributes of true God, by virtue of the personal union, and it also better secures and maintains the honour of his deity, by guarding it from those inferior attributions and characters, which otherwise must be

ascribed to it before his appearance in flesh; and this it doth by proposing a nature below godhead, which is a fitter subject of these attributions.

It allows him also, all the honourable and peculiar prerogatives of his conception, and the birth of his body, upon which account, as well as others, he was called *the Son of God.*

And besides this, it supposes his human soul to be a most illustrious spirit, which had a long prior glorious existence before his incarnation, and to be the " first-born of the creation of God," and to have been present with the Father, surveying and approving of his works of creation, and perhaps also employed by him in adorning and disposing various parts of the new-created world; so far as any thing below pure godhead was capable of being employed in that work.

Perhaps it will be objected,

Objection. That this exalts his human nature indeed, and raises it as high as the arians have raised the notion of their *Logos,* or soul of Christ, which they suppose to be the sublimest nature he has, and call it his godhead or divinity.

But it may be easily replied here,

Answer. And what if we do take in all the advantages which the arians so much boast of, and thereby support our own faith more honourably? This will bereave their scheme of its fairest allurements and strongest supports. What if we do advance the human nature of Christ as high as their *Logos?* Yet whilst we strenuously maintain the necessity of true and proper godhead to belong to the person of our Lord Jesus Christ, in order to answer the many divine names, titles, attributes, operations, and worship, which are ascribed to him in Scripture, we can be in no danger of compliance with the arian error, which attributes all these divine characters to *the man Christ Jesus,* and denies his personal union to the godhead.

The aggrandizing of the *man Jesus* has not been esteemed dishonourable to his deity. Doctor John Owen affirms, " the nature of the *man Christ Jesus* to be filled with all the divine graces and perfections whereof a limited created nature is capable;" *Meditations on the Glory of Christ,* page 112. And Doctor Thomas Goodwin asserts the *man Jesus,* by virtue of union to the divine nature, to be " as glorious a creature as can possibly be made by God;" Vol. III. Book III. Chap. VII. page 104.

And what injury can it be to our holy religion, or what hurt can it do to the gospel of Christ, to suppose his soul to be as glorious and sublime a being as any thing can be, which is not God? This is doing honour to the man whom God the Father *delights to honour,* and " in whom the godhead dwells bodily:" And while it wonderfully exalts our esteem of the human nature of Christ, it does not diminish the least degree of honour or adoration due to his deity.

Nor can any danger arise to the sacred doctrine of the satisfaction and atonement of Christ, from this exaltation of his personal excellencies and honours; but rather it sheds a new glory upon this doctrine, and renders our blessed Saviour so much the fitter to undertake that great, that glorious, and dreadful work. Suppose it should be said that this human soul, this *man Jesus,* according to this opinion, is *worth ten thousand of us,* as the people said to David; then certainly he is so much the more proper person to become a surety for ten thousands of sinners; his life is the more valuable sacrifice to redeem millions of lives; and the death of a man so transcendently excellent, is a fitter price to ransom innumerable multitudes of men from death. Yet the

infinite merit of his sufferings to satisfy for the infinite offences of mankind, in my judgment, arises still from the dignity of his whole person, who is God as well as man, and includes in it the infinite deity united to a finite or created nature; and probably for this reason, was that expression used, *Acts* xx. 28, "God purchased the church with his own blood."

Advantage IV. "This doctrine greatly magnifies the self-denial and the condescending love of our Lord Jesus Christ, in his state of humiliation and death; it casts a thousand rays of glory upon all the scenes of his humbled estate; it makes his subjection and obedience to the will of the Father appear much more illustrious, and his charity and compassion to perishing mankind stand in a very surprising light."

Conceive of this glorious human spirit, the only begotten Son of God, who was vested with such dignity before the creation of the world, united personally to the divine nature, and thus adored by angels, appearing often to the patriarchs, in the form of God, with rays of divine majesty, and governing the nation of Israel, or church of God, during all the former ages: Behold this holy and happy spirit descending from heaven, to take upon him, not flesh only, but *the likeness of sinful flesh;* and according to the ancient covenant between him and his Father, now uniting himself to animal nature, in very mean and despicable circumstances, and actually, really, and sensibly feeling the hardships of poverty and a low estate: See that illustrious being who had been surrounded with ministering angels for many ages, coming into our world with all the marks of poverty and meanness: Behold one higher than angels, supreme, above principalities and powers, thrones and heavenly dignities, made *a little lower than angels,* by being confined to flesh and blood, or made "for a little while," βραχύ τι,* *lower than the angels,* and even below the common rank of men; brought forth in a stable, beside the ox and the ass; this very being himself was united to the flesh and limbs of a helpless infant, wrapped in swaddling bands, and laid to sleep *in a manger:* See this glorious spirit, who was replenished with all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge necessary for his illustrious pre-existent state, cramped and confined in its operations by the feeble engine of the body of a babe, and willingly submitting to have a veil of darkness cast over its most sublime intellectual qualifications, and recover his ideas by human degrees: "For the child Jesus grew in wisdom and knowledge, as he grew in stature," *Luke* ii. 52. Contemplate this most excellent being enduring all the feeble and innocent frailties of an infant state, wearing out the years of childhood among the poor and necessitous children in the lower ranks of life, himself the reputed son of a carpenter, and subject to his earthly parents; he that was with God when he built the heavens, and said, *Let there be light;* the first among those *sons of God,* who *shouted for joy,* when he laid the foundations of the earth: Behold him now, perhaps, sweating and toiling with the saw and the hammer, as tradition tells us, to make plows, harrows, and yokes for oxen: Consider this blessed soul, the ancient ornament of heaven, and the brightest created spirit there, now spending thirty years together in utmost obscurity, who had lived for four thousand years in the midst of divine splendours: Trace him wandering through the villages from town to town, hungry, thirsty, and weary: Follow this illustrious man, travelling on foot to preach the gospel, attended with a few poor fishermen, instead of the chariots of God and the legions of angels, legions and chariots

* It is either *for a short season,* or *in a small degree.*

that waited on him at mount Sinai, when in majesty and terror he delivered the law: Consider this very person, abused, reproached, and called a blasphemer and a devil, who was the fairest image, and the delight of God his Father, and "rejoicing always in his presence, before the earth or her mountains were made:" Look upon this innocent, this holy soul arraigned at the impious tribunal of Pilate, and condemned to the shameful cross, as a scandalous malefactor!

See the ancient and original king of Israel, who had made David and Solomon, and all their race, his deputies for many generations; see him crowned with thorns instead of glory; see him scourged, buffetted, nailed to the cursed tree between two thieves, his hands and feet pierced, his limbs stretched out in grievous torture, and himself groaning and expiring in blood and anguish!

Behold this original favourite, forsaken of God his Father, in that dreadful hour of darkness, and assaulted by the armies of hell with rage, and impudence, and horrid temptations: Think of this holy soul just departing; his soul by the force of exquisite torment, perhaps, driven out of the sacred mansion of his flesh, even that body which the Father had prepared for him; he was banished out of this world, by those very criminals, those merciless rebels, for whose salvation he came down to dwell in it!

Think of that ancient darling of heaven, now made the sport of the jewish rabble, a sacrifice both to the fury of men and to the arrows of vindictive justice, while he was amazed with inward agonies, and his soul *exceeding sorrowful, even unto death*, when "the sword of God awoke against the shepherd of his Israel, against the man that was his neighbour, his companion," before the angels were made!

Collect all these strange and astonishing ideas together, survey them in one view, and say, how divinely glorious was the love of God in parting with such a Son from his bosom! How amazing was the condescension and self-denial of this glorious Saviour in giving himself for us! How inimitable was his submission to his heavenly Father's will! His zeal for his Father's honour, and his godlike charity and compassion to sinful man! When we contemplate his holy soul in his pre-existent and exalted state, foreknowing and surveying all these indignities, these agonies and deaths, and yet resolving to descend into flesh at his Father's proposal, and to endure them all for the redemption of sinners, to what an inconceivable height of sacred astonishment doth this raise all the wonders of his painful life and his love! And how doth it awaken all that is tender in the bosom of a Christian, and penetrate the very heart with divine affection and gratitude to the Son of God, his Saviour!

When we conceive of this pre-existent soul of Christ, this glorious, this holy and happy spirit, with pleasure consenting to his Father's proposal of this most surprising abasement and bloody agonies, it gives us an example of such profound humility, such absolute obedience to God his Father, and such unspeakable love to sinful men, as far surpasses the greatest instances that he ever gave, or ever was capable of giving, while he was here upon earth, if we suppose, according to the common opinion, that he was merely born and trained up for this service, without his own previous consent. This idea of the love of Christ answers those sublime characters which the apostle gives of it, *Ephes.* iii. 18, 19. It is a love that has lengths and breadths in it, that has heights and depths; it is a love that *passeth knowledge!*

You will reply, perhaps, "That most part of this representation is true in some

sense, if you only suppose the divine nature of our Lord Jesus Christ existing before his incarnation, and consenting that his human nature should suffer all this." I answer,

Answer. Many of these things, by the help of tropes and figures, may be said concerning the deity of Christ, or God manifest in flesh; but if we leave out the figure of communication of properties, and speak in such plain and natural terms as Scripture seems to use generally on this occasion, it signifies only "God's will that the *man Christ* should suffer these sorrows, and that the *man Jesus* passively consented to suffer them when it was revealed to him that he was born and made for this purpose." But the divine nature itself could really suffer nothing of all this; the utmost condescension of the godhead was, that it stood related to the man who endured these sufferings: And infinite condescension it was indeed, for *God manifest in the flesh* to be thus dishonoured and unglorified. But the godhead itself is impassible still, and cannot really suffer pain or loss; nor undergo proper sensible humiliation, shame, or sorrow.

Whereas by aggrandizing the human nature of Christ, by this doctrine of his pre-existent state, we see that very same glorious being itself who suffered all this, actually leaving the bosom or beatifying presence of his Father, really divesting himself of his primeval glories and joys in the literal sense, and without a figure, and freely devoting his very self to all these calamitous circumstances: We see that very same spirit descending from heaven to take a body upon him, that he might be capable of all these various stages of misery, and of sustaining these scenes of sorrow, anguish, and death, persevering in his resolutions till the dreadful work was all finished.

Now where we can explain the language of Scripture in a literal and proper sense, where we can also by this literal sense do unspeakable honour to God the Father, and his love, in sending such a Son, to Jesus the Saviour, and his grace, in coming down from heaven to suffer such sorrows, and at the same time can lay a just foundation for raising our own love, and zeal, and gratitude, both to the Father and the Son, to such unknown and superior degrees, and can set before our eyes such an astonishing example of humility, charity, and self-denial; surely these are such advantages to the christian scheme, and such honours to the blessed gospel, as should not be slightly rejected.

It should be also considered that the arians raise a very common and plausible objection against the vulgar explication of the Trinity and the divinity of Christ, because that scheme allows no real self-emptying, no literal and proper abasement and suffering of the Son of God, but only a relative abasement by being united to the man who did suffer. The author of the *Sober Appeal to a Turk or an Indian*, endeavours to expose the common scheme of the doctrine of the Trinity; because it supposes only a "relative humiliation, a relative or nominal suffering of the Son of God by his uniting himself to a man, while he himself really suffered nothing, underwent no diminution, but was all the while possessed of the highest glory, and of the same unchangeable blessedness," page 145. Whereas this doctrine of the pre-existence of the soul of Christ sets the whole scheme of the self-denial and sufferings of Christ, in as glorious and advantageous a light as their doctrine can pretend to do; and yet at the same time secures the divinity of Christ, together with all the honours of its condescending grace, by supposing this pre-existent soul always personally united to his divine nature. Thus all this sort of pretences for the support of the arian error is destroyed at once, by admitting this doctrine.

Advantage V. This doctrine of the pre-existent soul of Christ, not only casts a

new lustre upon several parts of the gospel, and displays the glories of the person of Christ, and the wonders of his love, in a fairer light; but it also " enables us to defend the doctrine of the deity of Christ with greater justice and success against many other cavils of the socinian and arian writers:" For while we keep this doctrine in our eye, we are by no means constrained to interpret any expression in the Old Testament concerning the divine nature of Christ, which carries in it something inferior to the majesty of godhead: Here we have a subject proper to receive these meaner attributions. There is no need to call the mere godhead of Christ a *man*, an *angel*, *a messenger*; there is no need to animate a human shape with pure deity in order to wrestle with Jacob, to eat and drink with Abraham, to appear in the form of a flame in the bush to Moses, to travel through the wilderness on a cloudy pillar, in the sight of all Israel, in order to direct the motion of their camp: There is no need to suppose the pure godhead talking with Joshua, and conversing familiarly with Gideon, nor holding a plumb-line in his hand while he stood upon the wall in the view of Amos.

The arian will tell us, that these things seem to be too mean and low condescensions for the great God of heaven and earth to practise; and thence they infer, that the person to whom these things are ascribed cannot be true God. Behold then this glorious spirit, the Son of God, the soul of Jesus Christ, the man personally united to the divine nature, appearing to perform these actions, to sustain these inferior characters, and to solve all this difficulty; and yet he is rightly called *God*, *Lord*, *Jehovah*, and has the perfections and honours of godhead ascribed to him; for he is God as well as man, though his human nature is the immediate agent in these inferior transactions.

Advantage VI. As this doctrine casts a beauty upon various passages of Scripture, and upon the whole scheme of the christian faith, so " there is not one Scripture, nor one point or article of our faith, that can receive any evil influence from it, no dangerous consequences, that I know of, can possibly attend it." Some of the most zealous and learned defenders of the sacred Trinity have acknowledged to me, that they could see no danger of heresy in it, nor any injury to sacred truth, though they themselves had not seen this doctrine yet in a convincing light.

And as there is no article of the christian faith that is endangered by it, so " neither does it alter any of the particular schemes of doctrine which divines of various parties have espoused." You may still follow the sentiments of John Calvin, or Arminius, or the intermediate schemes of Monsieur Amyrald and Mr. Baxter; for this doctrine makes no innovation in all the peculiar matters of dispute between these great men, but sets the whole contrivance of our salvation, according to any of their schemes, in a better light, and throws perhaps an impartial brightness upon the gospel, though it should be explained in any of their particular methods.

" Nor does it in the least interfere with any particular schemes, which men have invented to solve the difficulties of the blessed doctrine of the Trinity." If this sentiment of pre-existence be allowed, the godhead of the sacred persons may still be explained, either according to the ancient athanasian scheme, which Bishop Pearson, and Bishop Bull have defended; or according to the modern or scholastic athanasianism, which Dr. Cheynell, Dr. Owen, Dr. South, Bishop Stillingfleet, and others, have well displayed; or according to the hypothesis of Dr. Fowler, the late Bishop of Gloucester; or that of the learned Mr. John Howe; or according to the sen-

timents of the great and learned Dr. John Wallis, an eminent member of the assembly of divines. This sentiment of the pre-existent soul of Christ has a friendly aspect upon any scheme that maintains the godhead of the sacred Three; and may be easily assumed and ingrafted into any one of them: But the socinian and arian errors are inconsistent with it, as I have explained it.

To conclude this last set of arguments on this subject, I beg leave briefly to recapitulate them in this manner: There are many dark and difficult texts of Scripture, which have puzzled interpreters in several ages, and which have hung heavy upon the various schemes that support the doctrine of the deity of Christ. Now suppose there could be one single clew found out, which leads us into such a solution of all these difficulties, and such an interpretation of these Scriptures, which has the following advantages attending it, *viz.*

1. Which gives the most natural, and obvious, and literal sense; so that every common reader, that had no pre-conceived notions or schemes of thought, will readily run into at the very hearing of it:

2. Which puts learned men to no trouble of figures and metaphors, such as prolepses, that is, speaking of things before they are done; or catachreses, that is, calling the eternal God, without actual union to human nature, a *man*, or an *angel*, or a *messenger*, a *captain*, *&c.*

3. Which is most consistent with, and most agreeable to all other parts of the word of God, both in the Old Testament and in the New, and renders the exposition of many other texts easier and plainer than before, and sets the several parts of Scripture in a beautiful harmony:

4. Which interferes with no particular scheme of divinity, nor makes any alterations in the important articles of our faith: And thus it does not widen the common differences of the several parties of Christians, but freely allows each of them their own sentiments in the common controversies of religion: And yet,

5. Which assists us to answer the objections of our opponents against the divinity of our blessed Saviour, and also allures them to embrace the truth:

6. Which aggrandizes the personal glories of our Lord Jesus Christ, and raises his condescension and his love to most amazing degrees:

7. Which spreads a new lustre over the whole gospel of Christ, and the various transactions recorded in the word of God.

I say, suppose such a single clew were found out, to lead us into the understanding of the holy Scripture in such a manner as I have described, I would humbly ask, whether it does not bid fair for the truth of the gospel, and the very meaning of the sacred writers? And whether it has not sufficient force and allurement in it to invite our assent? Such is the doctrine of the pre-existence of the human soul of Christ.

SECTION VI.

OBJECTIONS ANSWERED.

When any doctrine has been proved by sufficient force of argument, there may be still various difficulties that remain to perplex it. But if those difficulties are not of equal force or evidence with the arguments that have been before produced for the

support of it, we may reasonably give our assent to the doctrine, and wait until providence may afford a fairer light to scatter the clouds that hang upon it. There is one learned author,* who has written upon this subject, speaks with so much freedom as to tell us, that "in this doctrine of the pre-existent soul of Christ, the difficulty of every thing vanishes, except that of bringing men off from expounding the Scripture by human authorities as the key of divine oracles; and without doubt," saith he, "there the difficulty will lie, when all is said." So confident is he of the truth of it, and that on solid and sufficient reason.

However, that I may make it appear that the difficulties and objections which attend this doctrine may have a fair solution given them, I have left the last Section for this purpose, in which they are ranged in a fair, just order; and I hope the opposers, if any such be found, will have no reason to complain that I have not displayed them in their complete light and strength; and perhaps by this means the tender and scrupulous Christian may have some stumbling-blocks removed that lay in his way, and be more easily induced to receive this doctrine, and to pay proper honour to our blessed Lord.

Objection I. "Is not Christ frequently in Scripture called *a man?* Now this glorious being, with such extensive powers as you describe, is something above a human soul; it is far above angels, and therefore, though it be united to a body, it will not make a man."

Answer I. The name of *man* denotes a nature, which is made up of a mind or spirit united to an animal body in human shape. But the name *angel* signifies originally a *messenger*, and denotes the character of an office sustained by a spirit, either with, or rather without a human body, and is most frequently so used in Scripture; though angels have often appeared in human shapes, being appointed by the great God to assume such a shape on proper occasions.

Answer II. All the idea which I have of a human soul is this, *viz.* a created mind or spirit which hath understanding, and will, and rational powers, and which is fit to be united to a human body, in such a manner as to exert the powers of a man, to feel the appetites, and sensibilities, and passions of a man, as to receive impressions or sensations, whether pleasant or painful, by the means of that body, and is also able to actuate and influence all the animal powers of that body in a way agreeable to human nature. Now though the powers of the human soul of Christ may be as much superior to the most exalted man or angel, as the powers of the most exalted man are superior to the powers of an ideot; yet this does not hinder it from being properly called a *human soul*, supposing it still capable of, and fit for, such an union to a human body as I have described.

Answer III. The powers of the human soul of Christ in his now glorified state, are represented in the word of God to be so extensive beyond and above men or angels, that might give as just an occasion for this objection as any thing I have asserted concerning his pre-existent state, and yet he is still *a man*. What large and comprehensive faculties of understanding and will may be communicated to a glorified creature, is far above our skill to determine: Now Christ was in glory, or was a glorified creature, before he was in flesh, even *before the world was* made; *John* xvii. 5. And therefore his ancient powers in the pre-existent state might be very great, and yet his soul might still be a human soul.

* Mr. Joseph Hussey, who was really a man of learning, though he had some odd and peculiar sentiments.

But if no mere creature were capable of such powers and honours as are attributed to Christ in his exalted state, yet we cannot determine what vast and amazing capacities such a creature may be endued with, who was always personally united to God; and it is in this view, it is Christ as a man united to godhead, who has such extensive powers as may fit him to govern, and to judge the world, as I have shewn in a former discourse, to which I refer the reader. See pages 644—674.

I add further, that it was the perusal and study of some of those Scriptures, wherein so vast and extensive a knowledge and power are attributed to *the man Jesus* in his present glorified state, that led the way to my more easy belief of the powers and glories of his ancient state of pre-existence: And thence I thought I might infer, that since the *man* who has these amazing glories and powers now, was once without them here on earth; therefore the same human soul might be with God the Father from the beginning of the world; might enjoy some part of these powers and glories, and yet for a season divest himself of them at his incarnation, and then be restored to them again with a most illustrious addition as a reward of his sufferings; *John* xvii. 5.

Objection II. Some persons have been ready to cry out against this doctrine, as though it supposed the "pre-existent nature or natures of Christ to be united to a mere carcase, if it were united only to an animal body without a soul or spirit."

Answer I. In ancient and more ignorant ages, this might perhaps be a stumbling-block to some weaker philosophers, who would mingle their mistaken philosophy with their Christianity, and falsely imagined that an animal body was a mere dead carcase, without some immaterial being in it, some superior vital soul or spirit: But in the present age, when it is generally believed by the best philosophers, that animal bodies may have animal life in and of themselves, and all correspondent animal motions and powers, without any spiritual intelligent thinking substance superadded to them, this objection vanishes. Christ's pre-existent soul united to his divine nature, assumed a living animal human body when he became incarnate; for it is now agreed that the human thinking rational soul does not give animal life to the organized body, which life arises from the circulation of the blood, inspiration and expiration of air, &c.

Answer II. But suppose the human body were lifeless, without a rational soul, why may not Christ's rational pre-existent soul be united to this body, and give life to it as well as a new created soul? Therefore this objection vanishes in all the views of it.

Objection III. "How can you suppose so glorious a Being as you have described, who was present at the creation of the world, who governed the nation of Israel, and transacted the affairs of the church, for four thousand years, should lose all its vast treasures of ideas, and its extensive faculties, and become ignorant as a human infant, and grow up by degrees to knowledge and wisdom? Yet this is asserted concerning Christ in his childhood, Luke ii. 52, *Jesus increased in wisdom and stature.*"

Answer. If such a sentiment as this can be fairly accounted for according to reason and Scripture, then the objectors must allow that it adds a most astonishing lustre to the humility, condescension, self-denial, and love, of our blessed Lord. Now let us see whether it may not be explained according to the common laws of union between a human soul and body.

Amongst these laws of this union, which are appointed by God our Creator, it is evident from manifold experience, that this is one, *viz.* "That though the soul may have in itself ever so rich ideas, or powers ever so glorious and extensive, yet while it is

united to animal nature in this manner, it can exert them to no further than the organs of the animal will admit, or than those organs are fit to assist in such operations." There have been many instances wherein persons of eminence and skill in arts or sciences, have had the brain, with all the traces and images which were impressed upon it, so confounded by some disease, that they have lost almost all their ideas, and all their skill; they have forgot even their native language, and they knew not their own names: Sometimes by slow degrees they have recovered their ideas and words again, and perhaps in some years have arrived at their former excellencies; the brain has recovered its old traces and images again, and the soul has recognized them with pleasure, and that in much less time than it was first employed in acquiring them.*

Yet further, let us suppose the soul of the greatest philosopher or mathematician united to the body of a new-born infant: This soul would find no images or traces on the brain of the babe correspondent to his ancient ideas; but on the other hand it would receive incessant impressions and sensations from this infant brain, according to the laws of union, derived from the sensible objects around it, or the natural inward motions and appetites that attend the infant state; and thus all its ancient and learned ideas would be as it were obliterated for a season, or rather concealed and overwhelmed, or buried by the impetuous impressions of animal nature, and by the constant importunity of such sensations and images as belong to a new-born child.

It is true indeed that such a learned soul would recover its own ideas by much swifter degrees than one that had never possessed them; and it would form proper traces and images on the young human brain with much greater speed and facility than other children could attain them, whose souls never had these learned ideas.

And is it not possible that this may be the case of the *holy child Jesus?* His glorious soul might submit to have its former numerous and sublime ideas at its first union to animal nature, so concealed and overwhelmed by the importunate and overbearing impressions of infant animal nature, that it might recover them again only by such degrees as flesh and blood would admit; and thus he was "made for a little while lower than angels," as *Heb.* ii. 9, and so might "grow in wisdom and knowledge and stature together," as in *Luke* ii. 52. And indeed if we compare this with *Isaiah* ix. 6, and vii. 14, 15, those verses may be naturally explained to this sense. He was a child born, he was a son given; a virgin conceived and bare a son, and called his name *Immanuel:* "Butter and honey did he eat, that he might know to refuse the evil and choose the good;" that is, he was nourished with the common food which they gave young children, that he might grow up by degrees to human understanding, and knowledge of distinction between good and evil.

It seems also agreeable to the history of the gospel, that our blessed Lord attained the knowledge of things by much swifter degrees, and far greater facility, than common children; for at twelve years old he was found discoursing with the Doctors in the temple: And when he first preached to the Jews, they wondered how this man should know letters, *having never learned,* John vii. 15. And then in his manly state, he knew

* This may be represented by an easy similitude. Suppose an organist of exquisite skill in music should have all the pipes of his instrument filled with mud, he could neither excite with his hand, nor receive with his ear, any of those rich varieties of sound which belong to the organ, until by degrees the bellows and pipes were cleansed; and thus by degrees he would form and hear broken peices of tunes, until the muddy obstacle being quite removed, the grateful harmony will be recovered, and the former skill of the organist appear.

his near relation to God, and his pre-existent glory, as many of his own speeches testify. According to this representation, Mr Fleming, in his *Christology*, Book III. page 455, supposes "the notices of former things to be so far obliterated from the memory of this glorious spirit, as was just necessary to his being fitted for a state of trial in a human body. But he did so far remember his former exaltation and glory in general, as frequently to mention it, and to plead it sometimes in prayer to his Father;" particularly in *John* xvii. 5.

I am not so fond of this representation of things as to persuade myself that my readers will readily receive such a strange alternation of scenes passing over the soul of our blessed Lord; especially if they have never accustomed their understandings to indulge any opinion different from the common track: Yet I can declare solemnly, that after my best searches into the word of God, I can see nothing unscriptural, absurd, or dangerous, in such a representation; and I am well assured it gives the highest honour to our blessed Redeemer for this surprising instance of his obedience to his Father, and condescending love to mankind: Nor is there any thing we can imagine that will set his admirable self-denial and humility, and his inimitable love, in a nobler light; or more aggrandize the love of the Father in parting with such a Son out of his bosom, and confining him to such a state of union to a body, and such amazing humiliation.

Objection IV. "Is it not said frequently in the New Testament, that Christ was exalted to glory and honour, and to the government of all things, after his resurrection, as a reward of his sufferings and death? Now if the human soul of Christ, in its pre-existent state, being in union with the divine nature, had glory and happiness *before the world was*, and might be employed in most glorious works, even at the creation of the world, and afterwards in the works of providence; then how can this excellent spirit be said to be exalted as a reward of his sufferings, by having the government of the world given to him after his resurrection, or by being advanced to glory, and honour, and happiness, in heaven?"

Answer I. I have already shewn, that how great and glorious soever the powers of Christ were before his incarnation, yet he might be made a governor not only of the church, or of God's chosen people the Jews, during all former ages of his pre-existent state, and thus he was called the *king of the Jews;* but after his sufferings he was advanced to sovereignty over all nations, and made *head over all things*, and all nations of mankind, for the church's sake; *Ephes.* i. 22.

Answer II. What affairs he transacted, and what honours he received, during his pre-existent state, among the children of men, was, for the most part, in his Father's name, and as sustaining the character and person of God his Father: Now since his sufferings and death, he is advanced to receive these honours in his own name, as well as raised to a government of much larger extent. Before the creation, he had no honour from creatures, and after the creation, he had not such sublime and distinct honours paid to his human nature, before his incarnation, as he has now in heaven.

Answer III. It is very plain, that though the human soul of Christ might enjoy a glorious degree of honour and happiness before his incarnation, yet having properly the nature of a human soul, it could not arrive at its perfection of appointed happiness, but by its union with a human body; even as the spirits of departed saints enjoy a glorious degree of honour and happiness in the world of spirits; yet neither their honour nor happiness is complete until the resurrection, when they shall be rejoined

to immortal bodies, and their happiness and honour shall be completed by unknown sensations of pleasure. Besides, that sensible survey, those various sensations and eye-sight of their own exaltation, which they acquire by the means of their union to a glorified body, is a farther kind of honour and happiness than in a separate state they were capable of.

Thus the human soul of Christ having passed through the sorrows of life, and the painful sensations that arose from its union to our flesh in such poor and infirm circumstances, having suffered shame and reproach, and a thousand indignities from men, and having felt the agonies of death as a ransom for them, was exalted both to greater honour and greater happiness at his resurrection and ascension, by being united to a body raised in power and in glory, than he could have been without it.

1. He was exalted to greater degrees of happiness, by receiving all that intense pleasure, and those unknown sensations of delight, which are capable of being conveyed to a spirit by the medium of a body, a glorious body; and this as a reward of his sensations of pain in the body of his humiliation.

2. It is most probable that he is, and shall be exalted also to greater degrees of honour, by seeing and hearing, or taking in perhaps by some corporeal methods, all the honours done to him by the whole human and material creation, and in beholding with a vast and comprehensive survey, all the subjection and obedience of the known and unknown worlds of spirits dwelling in flesh, paid to him; and particularly all the acclamations and worship of all the glorified saints paid to his divine person as dwelling in a human body, and this as a reward of that shame and reproach, and those uneasy passions, which he might sustain in animal nature in his humbled state.

Thus it appears how the soul of Jesus Christ, though it had very great powers and dignities and blessedness in its pre-existent state, yet may receive a most sensible addition to its honours and happinesses when he was raised from the dead, and ascended to heaven in a glorified body. There are parallel instances in Scripture which confirm this account of things: *John* xvii. 24, our Saviour says, "The Father loved him before the foundation of the world;" and yet his Father's love is said to be continued to him, and to be bestowed on him, on the account of this obedience: John xv. 10, *If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.* John x. 17, *Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life.* We must naturally suppose this to imply some additional instances and effects of the Father's love bestowed, or to be bestowed, on Christ, because of his obedience unto death: And what additional instances, manifestations, or effects, of the Father's love did the *man Jesus* receive, if his exaltation to superior degrees of honour and glory in heaven be not reckoned among them?

Objection V. "If the human soul of Christ had a being before his incarnation, how comes it to be expressed, that God *was manifest in the flesh*, and that *the Word was* God, and this Word *was made flesh?* Would it not have been much more proper to say, The soul of our Lord Jesus Christ was thus made flesh, or manifested in flesh?"

Answer I. The most usual way of expressing the incarnation of Christ is, by representing the *Son of God* as "coming in the flesh, Christ coming into the world, the Son of God *made of a woman*, the Son of God *sent into this world*," *&c.* This is the most frequent language of the New Testament: Now these words do most properly include,

if not chiefly denote, the soul of Christ, under the character of the Messiah. This was the Son of God, which was intimately united to flesh and blood. It is possible that the name, *Son of God*, may not so directly refer to the godhead of Christ, as it does to his human soul and his body; for since the idea of sonship carries in it the notion of derivation, and dependence, and inferiority, we should not without great necessity apply such ideas to godhead, whose very nature is to be supreme, underived, and independent. This hath been made to appear more at large in *An Essay on the Name, Son of God*, see pages 519—545.

It is granted there are two or three places which represent the divine nature, or God himself, as appearing in the flesh; and this may be written in those few places, with a special design to aggrandize the mystery of the incarnation, and spread a divine glory over it; always remembering that it is a great truth that "God himself was incarnate," though the more immediate subject of union to flesh was the human soul.

Answer II. It might be noted also, that that evangelical interpreter of Scripture, Dr. Goodwin, explains the *Logos*, or Word, even as it is described in the first chapter of *St. John's Gospel*, so as to include the idea of God-man, and to take in the human nature of Christ as well as the divine, when *the Word was with God*, and when *all things were made by him*. That author, indeed, supposes the human nature to be united at that time only in the divine idea, and by way of prolepsis, or anticipation: But if we suppose the term *Logos*, or Word, to include the human soul then actually united to the divine nature, which Dr. Goodwin takes only proleptically, then it will follow, that when the evangelist adds, verse 14, *The Word was made flesh*, or took a body upon him, he plainly includes the incarnation both of the human soul and the godhead together. The *Logos*, that is, the human soul united to godhead, or if you choose rather to say "the eternal Word in union with the human soul," became incarnate.

Objection VI. "This doctrine expounds some of those Scriptures to another sense, which were wont to be employed for the defence of the divinity of Christ, and that by applying them to his pre-existent soul: It exalts his human nature indeed, but perhaps it weakens the sacred article of his divine nature, by withdrawing some of the proofs of it."

Answer. There are many and sufficient arguments drawn from the Word of God to support the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, which cannot with any evidence, or truth, or justice, be turned to another sense, and indeed it is by such arguments as these that doctrine must be established; for if it be possible with fairness or justice to the text and context, to interpret a Scripture otherwise, and apply it merely to the pre-existent soul of Christ, it can never be a convincing and effectual proof of his divinity.

It is no injury to any cause, to remove those arguments from it which are in themselves feeble and unsupporting, lest when the adversary finds several of them trifling and utterly insufficient, he should be tempted to despise all the rest. If there be any of those Scriptures which are used to prove any doctrine that in their most natural, most proper, and most rational sense, and in their relation to the context, do rather signify something else, then they had much better be dropped or left out in the proof of that doctrine.

So if these Scriptures cited in this Discourse are in a much more natural and proper, easy and obvious manner applied to the pre-existent soul of Christ, than they are or

can be to the pure divine nature, then it is better to drop them in that argument, than to insist upon them; for all the reason in the world will lead us to give them the most obvious and natural exposition, and apply them to this pre-existent spirit. We ought not to deal falsely with the word of God, nor give it an unfair and improbable sense, under pretence of supporting the greatest truth. The gospel of Christ needs not our feeble artifices.

It should be observed also, that several of those passages of Scripture, which may be applied to the pre-existent soul of Christ, cannot properly be applied to it, considered alone by itself, without the personal union to his godhead; such are those, *Col.* i. 15—19. *Heb.* i. 3—8. *Prov.* viii. 22—31. And in this view they continue to support the divinity of Christ, as well as they did before: And in my opinion, when they are set in this light, they render these proofs of his divinity more defensible, and at once maintain the sacred idea of Christ our Mediator as the great *Theanthropos*, or God-man.

Objection VII. Some may imagine, and have been ready to object, that "This notion paves the way to lead us into the arian camp, since it agrees in so many parts with their sentiments of their *Logos*, which they call the divine nature of Christ."

Answer. This objection has been answered in part already; nor is there any such danger, while we maintain the necessity of the union of the divine nature to this pre-existent spirit, in order to make it capable of several names, titles, honours, and prerogatives, that are ascribed to it in Scripture, which are incommunicably divine.

But, on the other hand, why may not the charity of a reader give it another turn, and say, "It paves the way for the arians to come into the sentiments of the orthodox, and believe the divinity of Christ;" since it removes some of their greatest bars and objections against our common faith? It transplants their strongest allurements and fairest colours of argument into our own doctrine, and thereby renders their pretences to support their own scheme more feeble, ineffectual, and needless. It enjoys the advantages which their scheme pretends to, without any of those difficulties and inconveniencies with which their opinion is encumbered.

And I cannot but hope, that if ever the modern refiners of the arian error are allured and drawn to receive the truth, it must be by the means of this doctrine, and the happy consequences which attend it. Perhaps if this doctrine had been set in its fairest light, and published to the world in the days of the nicene council, it might have prevented the fatal and bloody contests that succeeded in the following ages; it might have been a happy medium, in the providence of God, to have reconciled the ancient arians to the catholic faith. This is the sentiment of the late reverend and learned writer, Mr. Robert Fleming, in his discourse on this subject, in his third volume of *Christology*.

Objection VIII. "Could such a doctrine as this be true, and yet the disciples of Christ know nothing of it, in our Saviour's life-time, nor the apostles express it in plainer language in their writings, nor the primitive fathers declare it as the sentiment of the church, nor even our own divines, in these enlightened days since the reformation, proclaim it to the world?"

Answer. As for the disciples, during the life of Christ, they may be supposed to have the same opinions concerning the soul of the Messiah, which many of the Jews had in and before their times; and that was, that the Messiah's soul was formed from

the beginning of the world:* And if they thought all human souls had a pre-existence, which some learned men suppose, then doubtless they believed the soul of Christ to have the same prerogative.

Besides, the several expressions which our Saviour used concerning his "coming down from heaven," his "returning thither again," his being "sent by the Father, not to do his own will," his praying for "the restoration of a glory which he had before the world was," and his speaking of "the love of God which he enjoyed before the foundations of the world;" all these expressions might justly and naturally lead them into the idea of the pre-existent soul of Christ: Since it is pretty evident, that they had but very little thought or belief of his divine nature before his resurrection. Some of their own expressions seem to intimate their assent to this doctrine of his pre-existent soul, when they tell him, *Now we are sure—that thou camest forth from God*, John xvi. 28, 29, 30. And they seemed to understand him in the literal sense, and without a parable or figure, when he told them, he "came forth from the Father, and came into this world; but he was now leaving this world, and returning to the Father."

As for the writings of the apostles St. Peter and Paul, these seem to manifest this doctrine, if the exposition which I have given of various parts of their Epistles be just and true. The apostle John speaking so often of Christ's coming in the flesh, seems to manifest that this was his conception of the matter, as though he supposed his soul to have an existence before.

As for the primitive writers of Christianity, of the first two or three hundred years, they express themselves in so inaccurate and confused a manner concerning the pre-existent nature of our Lord Jesus Christ, that it is hard to say what was their sense, or whether they had any uniform, regular, and settled ideas on this subject. Sometimes their language plainly denotes some pre-existent nature of Christ to be truly divine, and part of the very essence of God the Father, even his mind, his wisdom, &c. others of their speeches seem to sink it far below the dignity of godhead, when they speak of his temporal generation and derivation from God, as the author and cause of his being; from which the arian writers have taken occasion to suppose they were engaged on their side. Now as this doctrine of the pre-existent soul of Christ, united to true godhead, happily reconciles many difficult places of Scripture, so perhaps if it were wisely applied upon a diligent review of the writings of some of the fathers, this same doctrine might

* Bishop Fowler cites this passage from an ancient book of the Jews, called *Pesikta:* "After God had created the world, he put his hand upon the throne of his glory, and brought out the soul of the Messiah, with all his attendants, and said to him, Wilt thou heal and redeem my sons after six thousand years? He answered, I am willing so to do. Again therefore God said unto him, And art thou willing to suffer chastisements for the purging away their iniquities? And the soul of the Messiah answered, I will suffer them, and that with all my heart."

The late Dr. Thomas Burnet, of the Charter-house, in his book *De Statu Mortuorum et Resurgentium*, page 249, speaks thus, *Judæi & inter patres, &c.* that is, "The Jews, and some among the christian fathers, have determined, that the soul of the Messiah had an existence before his incarnation, and before the very origin of the jewish nation, before the law, and through the whole economy of the law and the prophets." Now if they supposed this soul joined with the *Logos*, by which he means his divine nature, they might well agree that this was the *shechinah* of the patriarchs and the prophets, and that these motions and returns from heaven to earth, and his appearances, whether in human shape or not, may be attributed to the Messiah, which can never belong to mere divinity. And indeed I can scarce understand Justin Martyr, and others of the fathers, who from the invisibility, infinity, and omnipresence, of God the Father, would prove that he never appeared, neither could he descend or ascend, or change his place: For unless the soul of the Messiah did pre-exist in union with the *Logos*, that is, his divinity, I cannot see how these arguments, drawn from invisibility and omnipresence, can be of any force with regard to God the Father, any more than to God the Son.

reconcile some of their strange expressions, which seem contradictory and inconsistent: At least I am sure it would have secured them from some of the absurdities which they seem to have fallen into.

It is worthy of our notice, that many, if not most of the ancient antenicene fathers, when they spake of the generation of the Son, understand by it "a voluntary generation or manifestation, some time before the world began, in order to create that world;" though they suppose the divine *Logos*, or Word, to exist in God, or in and with the Father, from all eternity. That great and zealous defender of the athanasian faith, the learned Doctor Waterland, allows this in his citation from several of those fathers; see *Second Defence of the Queries*, pages 104, 107, 283—292; and his *Third Defence*, page 25. Particularly Ignatius had this idea of the generation of the Son. Justin Martyr speaks of no generation higher than that voluntary antemundane generation, otherwise called manifestation. The *Logos* became a Son, according to Justin, by voluntary appointment; it is the procession makes him a Son, and that was voluntary. The Son proceeded light of light in time, according to Justin, and according to many more beside him, particularly Hippolytus, and perhaps even the nicene fathers. Tatian, who was Justin's scholar, speaks only of a temporal generation or procession. And Athenagoras and Theophilus speak of no higher generation than this. Clemens of Alexandria and Tertullian may be both allowed to go upon the same hypothesis, and Hippolytus was undoubtedly of the same mind, for he says, "The Father begat the Son when he willed, and as he willed;" that is, sent or shewed him to the world. Tertullian supposes the "sonship properly to commence with his procession, so that the *Logos* became a Son in time, and was not yet a Son until he came out to create."

We might ask here now, whether all these expressions may not be reconciled, if we suppose the deity of the second person of the Trinity, as some persons have done, to be an eternal divine principle in godhead, which is represented in Scripture as a person, called his *logos*, or *sophia*, his word, or his wisdom; and that, some time before the creation of the world, God created, generated, or caused to exist, the human soul of Jesus Christ, in an immediate union with this word or divine principle, and gave the whole *complexum* the same name, *viz.* the *Logos*, or Word, and ordained this glorious being, *viz.* his own divine Word, or *Logos*, united to the human spirit, to operate in creating and adorning the world, the human spirit having a subserviency herein to the divine principle, so far as it was possible for any thing beneath God to be employed in an inferior or ministerial manner in such sublime and divine work: Does not this give a fair, a natural, and easy explication of these glorious expressions of Scripture concerning our Lord Jesus Christ, that "by him God made the worlds," and "created all things by him," and "without him was nothing made that was made?" For the name, *Jesus Christ*, seems to imply something more than the mere divine power or principle, called the Word.

But I retreat, and mention no more of any attempt to give a particular idea of the divine nature of Christ, since this doctrine of his human soul's early existence is consistent with any known scheme of explaining his true and real deity.

Origen seems to be a believer of the pre-existent soul of Christ, when he says, "Perhaps the soul of the Son in its perfection was in God and his fulness, and coming out thence when he was sent by the Father, took a body of Mary;" and again, upon these words of John the Baptist, *After me cometh a man which is preferred before me; for*

he was before me; John i. 30. He says thus, that it is spoken of Christ, " that we may learn that the man (or manhood) also of the Son of God, mixed with his divinity, had a prior subsistence to his birth of the virgin." Origen also seems to allow this human soul to be the first created; for speaking of the formation of wisdom before the world, he says, " God created Ἔμψυχον Σοφίαν, an animated wisdom, or wisdom with a soul." And this opinion appeared so very reasonable, that we find some marks of it in the later centuries. For the author of the *Meditations*, called St. Austin's, distinguishes between *eternal wisdom, the Son of God*, and the *first-created wisdom*, which he makes to be a rational and intellectual mind. See more of this kind in the learned Dr. Knight's *Primitive Christianity Vindicated*, in answer to Mr. Whiston, page 45.

But after all, though it be a doctrine, that has so many happy advantages attending it, yet it is not necessary in order to make a man a Christian, and therefore many primitive Christians might not believe it. It casts a beauty indeed upon the whole christian faith, but it does not make a part of the essence of it. Now there are many such beautiful doctrines, which might have a veil of darkness or confusion thrown upon them very early in the christian church, especially amidst the reign of antichrist, and again after some ages may emerge into light, and entertain the Christians of such a later age with the brightness and pleasure of them: How was the doctrine of the millennium long obscured, that is, " the happy state of the church before the end of the world?" It was known and believed in the first centuries, but after the third it was counted a sort of heresy for several ages; and yet now it has arisen into further evidence, and has obtained almost universal assent: So this doctrine of Christ's pre-existent soul, though it might have lain dormant several ages, yet since that excellent man, Dr. Henry More, has published it, near threescore years ago, in his *Great Mystery of Godliness*, it has been embraced, as Bishop Fowler asserts, " by many of our greatest divines, as valuable men as our church can boast of; though most of them have been too sparing in owning it, for fear, I suppose, of having their orthodoxy called in question."

The most modern authors and writings which have professed this doctrine publicly, are these that follow:*

1. Doctor Henry More, of *The Mystery of Godliness.*
2. Doctor Edward Fowler, Bishop of Gloucester, in his *Discourse of the Descent of the Man Christ Jesus from Heaven*, and his *Reflections on the Examiner of this Discourse*, (Doctor William Sherlock, Dean of St. Paul's.)
3. *A Defence of the Bishop's Discourse*, by a Presbyter of the Church of England.
4. *A Second Defence*, by the Publisher of the First.
5. Mr. Robert Fleming, in his First and Third Volumes of *Christology.*
6. A very great man, cited, but nameless, by Bishop Fowler, in his *Reflections, &c.* page 111.
7. Mr. Joseph Hussey, in his *Treatise of the Glory-man.*
8. Doctor Francis Gastrell, Bishop of Chester, in his *Remarks on Doctor Clarke's Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity*, page 47.
9. Mr. Nelson's learned friend, Doctor Knight, in *Answer to Doctor Clarke*, pages 65, 103.
10. Doctor Thomas Bennet, in his *Discourse of the Trinity in Unity.*

* *Note*, This was written at least twenty or thirty years ago; many more persons may be now found who have acknowledged it.

11. The learned Doctor Thomas Burnet, of the Charter-house, in his book, *De Statu Mortuorum et Resurgentium*, published after his death.

12. *The Doctrine of the Trinity intelligibly explained*, by Doctor Thomas Burnet, Rector of Westkington in Wiltshire, and Prebendary of Salisbury.

13. Doctor Knight's *Primitive Christianity Vindicated*, in answer to Mr. Whiston's bold assertions.

In three of these books, I confess, this opinion is but just mentioned, as the certain and probable opinion of the author; but in the rest it is strenuously asserted and maintained, and in some of them with great degrees of assurance: And I think every one of them do profess and maintain the real and proper deity of Christ in that or other parts of their works, so that there is no arian among them all.

After authors of such learning and reputation in the world, as some of these which are named, I have ventured to propose this doctrine once more to the public. It is attended with a variety of arguments drawn from the holy Scripture, for the support of it, and I have stated much stronger objections than I have ever met with in opposition to it, from any English or foreign writers, and I do not find them impossible to be answered.

I dare not assume that air of assurance which Bishop Fowler has done in several parts of his writings on this subject, when he tells us, "that there is no christian doctrine more clearly delivered than this, and even immediately by our Saviour himself, and often repeated by him: And let the opposers of it be as magisterially positive as they will, yet there is not more plain and undeniable evidence for any one article of faith than there is for this doctrine; and that this is the sense in which most certainly the disciples of our Lord understood his declarations." See his *Reflections on his Opposer, Doctor William Sherlock*, pages 3, and 23. Yet I think I can join with him, when he asserts that "our Saviour never said a syllable which so much as seems to contradict the plain literal natural sense of the words by which he chose to express this doctrine; and that it is worthy of our observation, that there is no one text in the Bible, that the Bishop knows of, whose plain and natural sense so much as seems to thwart the plain sense of those Scriptures that he has produced to support it;" and he adds, "what controverted point is there in religion, of which we can say the like?"

I easily persuade myself that most Christians will agree with me thus far, that if this doctrine be true, it gives a natural and easy solution of a great number of difficulties in the word of God, it adds beauty as well as clearness to many expressions in the New and Old Testament, and it enables us to answer many inconveniencies and appearing absurdities which the arians fling upon the common explications of the Trinity. But if there be any sufficient argument to refute this doctrine, and to prove it false, I am not so fond of it as to persist obstinately in the defence, nor make all things truckle and yield to this supposition.

The great doctrine of the deity of Christ, and his sacred office of mediator, may perhaps be maintained without it; but then we must return again to explain some of these difficult texts of Scripture by hard tropes and figures; we must speak of Christ as God-man before his taking our nature upon him, by way of prolepsis or anticipation. We must apply many inferior expressions of Scripture to the divine person of Christ, considered in his office as Mediator, which might otherwise and much better be applied to his human soul; we must construe some phrases into truth economically, which can never be true in their real and natural sense. We must indulge some catachreses or

improprieties of language in the Bible, which might be literally and properly expounded by the scheme now proposed: We must solve other expressions by the doctrine of communication of properties between the divine and human natures of Christ, in the same manner as we did before; some of which solutions, I confess, are certainly necessary, and always will be so, to explain some Scriptures that relate to the person of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to the well-known methods of speech in all nations and ages. But we would never choose these interpretations, where there is a more plain literal sense, which is perfectly accommodated to the text.

As this doctrine, so far as we have gone in explaining it, has given abundant light to many Scriptures, there are also other texts, which, if we drop this doctrine, we must leave under a heavy cloud still, among the ἄλυτα and δυσνοήτα, the unsolvables and the things hard to be understood; and we must still be daily waiting upon *the Father of lights*, until he shall give us further discoveries of his own meaning in those passages of his holy word, which I think are made sufficiently plain in and by this scheme: We must wait until providence and grace shall join to furnish us with a better clue than this to lead us into the mysterious glories of the person of our blessed Redeemer, the more complete knowledge whereof is reserved to entertain saints and angels in the future ages of blessedness. There, it is certain, if we shall be so happy as to accept of his gospel, we shall *see him as he is*, and *behold him face to face;* then shadows shall flee away, and darkness vanish for ever, for *in his light we shall see light.* Amen.

APPENDIX:

OR,

A SHORT ABRIDGEMENT OF THAT EXCELLENT DISCOURSE OF THE LATE REV. DR. THOMAS GOODWIN, "ON THE GLORIES AND ROYALTIES THAT BELONG TO JESUS CHRIST CONSIDERED AS GOD-MAN," IN HIS THIRD BOOK OF HIS "KNOWLEDGE OF GOD THE FATHER AND HIS SON JESUS CHRIST," PAGE 85, IN THE SECOND VOLUME OF HIS WORKS.

HAVING found occasion, in several parts of the foregoing Discourse, to cite some passages out of this learned and pious writer, who soars far higher than I dare to do, in describing the glories due to the human nature of Christ Jesus, I thought it might be very entertaining to many of my readers, as well as serviceable to the doctrine here proposed, to draw out an abridgement of that discourse which he wrote concerning *the Glories of Christ as God-man*, so far as it relates to this doctrine.

Hereby the pious reader will easily perceive, that the manner in which I have expounded many Scriptures, is nobly patronised and supported by this great author, whose name and memory are honoured among evangelical writers, and continue in high esteem among many private Christians of the present age; and whose special character it is to have searched deep into the hidden treasures of the word of God, and drawn out thence many peculiar glories which belong to the person and offices of our blessed Saviour.

Though I call this an *abridgement* of Doctor Goodwin's Discourse, yet it is necessary I should tell the world that it may rather be called a "Collection of his Sentiments in his own Words;" for I have never added or altered any words but where it was necessary to make the sense plain, and to connect the sentences: So that both the sentiments and the language are all his own.

In Chapter I. page 95, he lays the foundation of his discourse on Col. i. 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, and transcribes all the verses: *Who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: All things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist: And he is the head of the body, the church; who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; that in all things he might have the pre-eminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell.* Then he writes thus: "All this fulness, and the particulars thereof mentioned in this text, are attributed to Christ as God-man, either as actually united, or to be united in one person."

"To take off prejudices," saith he, "it is meet the reader should know how that holy and greatest light of the reformed churches, Calvin, interprets the first passage, He is *the*

image of the invisible God, viz. ' It is he alone by whom God, who is otherwise invisible, is manifested to us: I know how the ancients are wont to expound this, because they had a controversy with the arians, who held Christ to be a mere creature; they urge this place for Christ's being of the same essence or nature with the Father: But in the mean time they omitted what was the chief thing in the words, namely, how the Father hath exhibited himself in Christ to be known by us."

Then the Doctor adds, page 101, " That all and every one of these particulars, before rehearsed, are those glories which as so many several pieces do make up this pre-eminence, and are parts of that fulness which is said to dwell in him; and the apostle makes all this fulness to reside in Christ by an act of God's good pleasure. Hence I infer, of all these parts and pieces, that they must be understood of him as God-man; for had they been spoken of him singly as God, they are natural to Christ, and not at all subjected to God's good will." Page 102, " But take all these as spoken of Christ as ordained to be God-man, all this might indeed be the object of God's decree and the act of his good pleasure, and it was the highest act of grace and God's good pleasure to ordain that man to such an union."

Chapter II. pages 103, 104. " Christ *is the image of the invisible God;* which words are resolved into this assertion, That in that *man Christ Jesus,* by virtue of his union with the godhead, there is inherent a fulness of all divine perfections, which may make up an image of the attributes of the godhead, in so transcendent a way of excellency and eminency, as is incompatible and incommunicable to any mere creature remaining such."

" The godhead of Christ is as invisible as the godhead of the Father; but Christ is such an image as makes the godhead manifest and visible. In Christ as man united to the second person, there is a resultance, an edition of the godhead in all the perfections of it. He is the *express image,* or engraven image, *Heb.* i. 3, the shine, *the brightness of his Father's glory;* as the beams of the sun are to the body of the sun, so is Christ God's image; and this similitude the apostle there useth and applies it to him as he was man, namely, as he was *appointed heir of all;* which phrase, as he is merely the second person, might be used of him: Thus Beza, Cameron, and others have understood it."

" This image is such a system or fulness of perfections really inherent and appertaining unto the manhood, by virtue of that its union with the divine nature, as although infinitely coming short of the attributes that are essential to the godhead, yet is the completest image of them, and such as no mere creature is capable of. This in general may be made out of that parenthesis, in John i. 14, *And we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten* Son of God."

Page 105. "To give two or three instances of some of these perfections, peculiarly and incommunicably dwelling in the human nature of Christ; as wisdom, power, independency, and sovereignty:

" 1. There is a wisdom in Christ's human nature which is so high an imitation of the attribute of wisdom in God, as no creature, nor all creatures, could reach to, nor have attained; and therefore they, though they be called *wise,* yet not *wisdom,* as Christ God-man is called, 1 *Cor.* i. 24. And the reason why so transcendent a wisdom is in him as man, is given, Col. ii. 3, *In* Christ *are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge:* Not objectively only, but subjectively also, as whose knowledge in himself inherent contains in it all treasures of wisdom. Now the reason of all this fulness of wisdom in Christ is there given, *verse* 9, that *in him dwelleth all the fulness of the godhead bodily.*

"Christ is not omniscient as God is, but it is 'a similitudinary omniscience,' as Zanchy calls it, an image of God's omnisciency. God's knowledge extends itself not only to all that is made or to be done, but to all that he can make or do; which is an infinity. Christ's human nature, now glorified, knows all that God hath done or meant to do. It had, by virtue of its union with the divine nature, a right to know both things past, present, and to come; and so it is in a sense a kind of omnisciency, incommunicable to any other.

"2. The same holds in his power. It is not equal with God's: Yet there is a similitudinary omnipotence in Christ's human nature, both in that he can do whatsoever he will, his will agreeing with God's in every thing, and in that all that God will ever pitch upon to be done, he is an instrument of; *Matt.* xxviii. 18. All the businesses of the world run through his hands and his head; and therefore he is called *the power of God*, 1 Cor. i. 24, and *the arm of the Lord*, Isaiah liii. 1.

"John v. 19, 20, *The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do; for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth.* Here we have, 1. That whatever God doth, or means to do, the Son hath a hand in it. 2. That the Son knows all that is done by the Father. Here is both the omnisciency we speak of, and the omnipotency, in the terms we stated it, as respecting all God's works, *ad extra*, even all that ever was done. And this, 3. in an incommunicable way to any mere creature, for this is given him that he 'might be honoured even as the Father is honoured;' *verse* 23. And this, 4, in a similitudinary way, ὁμοίως, likewise, or in like manner: And, 5. all this Christ speaks of himself as *the Son of man;* and it is one of the greatest keys to John's gospel that multitudes of such speeches are spoken of him, both as God, and as God-man. But to put it out of all doubt, he speaks of himself in this discourse as he is the Son of man united to God, he himself in the close of all expressly explains it so. Verse 27, the Father has given the Son *authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of man.*

"3. Another attribute in Christ, which is such an image of what is in God, as is incommunicable to any mere creatures, is independency and sovereignty. This is one of the chiefest flowers in that crown of his glory. God might annihilate creatures at pleasure, and yet in so doing rob them of nothing, which they can lay a just claim to as their own; but it is not thus with Christ's human nature, now it is assumed into union with the second person, for it is invested with the royal prerogatives of the persons with whom it is one, it hath an independency like unto God's; such as is communicable to no creature: Therefore, says Christ, verse 26, *As the Father hath life in himself, so he hath given to the Son to have life in himself.* It is said to be *given* him, but by this union he is invested with this indisposable prerogative to *have life in himself*, and not to hold it by gift, though at first it were obtained so. Indeed it was a free act of grace in God at first, but in doing of it God did a wonder in the world, of all the greatest: For he sets up an independent creature, a creature backed with such a right to his being, that now himself cannot pull him down, nor dissolve that union again. And what a glorious image of God's independency is this?

"I might shew the like also in holiness and all other attributes; and it is a noble subject to spend pains upon, to set forth and cut out every limb of this vast image of all God's attributes that are in Christ merely upon his personal union. I have limned out only these two or three parts of it, that by the like proportion we might infer the vastness of all the rest."

Chapter III. page 109, " Christ *is the first-born of every creature:* This is not spoken of him simply as second person only, so as that his eternal generation as *Son of God* should be only intended; yet it does establish his godhead, for these things could not have been said of him had he not been God. *The first-born*, or first-begotten, *of every creature*, is spoken of him as he is admitted into the catalogue or society of the creatures, or as he is become one of them. Or take him as he is, the *Son of God* ordained to human nature, and then to have his name stand highest among the rest of the creatures. It is spoken of him in respect of a dignity and birth-right that this God-man hath at that instant he is admitted amongst the creatures; Psalm lxxxix. 27, *I will make him my first-born, higher than the kings of the earth;* Prov. viii. 23, *I was set up from everlasting.* The phrase, *I was set up*, will less permit us to understand it of his eternal generation, for that was an act of God's will."

Page 113, " For whom *all things were created*, Col. i. 16: Christ as God-man is set up as an universal end of the whole creation of God. His person, decreed to subsist in man's nature, was considered by God to be of that worth and distance above the creatures, that their very being and existing was to become absolutely and simply his propriety, of which prerogative no mere creature is capable."

Page 114. " Suppose God would decree him to be God-man, and to subsist in a human nature, and likewise withal would ordain multitudes of other things, *viz.* angels and men, &c. then it becomes the necessary due of this Christ, and that as God-man, to be set up by God in his decrees as the end of all those things. This did become that man's due and the necessary consequent of that union with God's Son; and accordingly that God should cast his decrees for Christ's glory as well as for his own. Hence we read Heb. i. 2, He is *appointed heir of all things.*

" And if it be affirmed, that then Christ needed not to have merited any glory to himself, this surely is a truth, though it may not be made use of to exclude another title unto this his own glory, namely that of purchase; for it is no dishonour to him to have two claims."

Page 116. " It is certain that all God's works, *ad extra*, whereof the union of the divine and human nature of Christ is one, are the objects of God's decrees; Col. i. 19, *It pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell.* And again, Psalm ii. 6, 7, *I will declare the decree—I have set my king upon my holy hill of Zion:* And upon this decree his kingdom over all is his due and inheritance."

Chapter IV. page 120. " This human nature is made God's *fellow*, as Zechariah calls him, *Zech.* xiii. 7. *The man*, God's *fellow*, is advanced to a fellowship in this society of the Trinity, and therefore to him God communicates proportionably without measure, as *John* iii. 34."

Page 121. " By means of taking up one reasonable creature, a man, into this highest union, he communicates the riches of his knowledge and wisdom, to the utmost that they are communicable to that creature so united; for it is his due to know more at the first instant of that his union than all the angels: For by virtue of that union he is presently in his Father's bosom; John i. 18, *The only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.* God can hide nothing from him which he means to do; he draws nearer to God infinitely than Moses did, or angels ever did or shall."

Chapter V. wherein the Doctor shews, that the glory which Christ, as God-man, had assigned him before the world, was in his election by the Father, signified in John xvii. 5, *Glorify me now with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.*

Page 124. " It is not the glory of the second person simply or alone considered, for this was not a thing to be prayed for, it is naturally and essentially his due; and he had it as much now at the time when he prayed, as he had from everlasting: The word, *Now glorify me,* necessarily implies a suspension of a glory due before; and it argues a glory to be given in time; for both which reasons it concerns the human nature, not the divine. The subject of the glory prayed for, is the man; Austin was convinced of this, though he was engaged against the arians as much as any in his time. It is the man, or rather the person of God-man in union together, is the subject prayed for: It is the petition of the person who had been humbled, who had glorified God on earth, and had finished his work and waited for this glory until now; and it is a glory suspended until this work was done."

" This will never be unriddled," says the Doctor, page 126, " so fairly any other way, as by predestination, that is the glory he was ordained to, as God-man; for he had before the world was, the title of *God-man elect,* although not of *God-man united to,* or *made flesh.* He bore the title and repute of it, and went under that name with God the Father. *Verse* 24, is explained to the same purpose, and must be interpreted of Christ as God-man, when he says, *The glory which thou* gavest *me, for thou lovedst me from the foundation of the world.*"

Chapter VI. page 151, the author declares that " Christ being the second person, did bear and sustain the glory of being God-man, all along from his predestination thereunto, and as an officer elect, he hath the title and honour accordingly, and had the glory of it before his Father."

" When he appeared to the patriarchs, and was with the people of God in the wilderness, and appeared as captain of the host of Israel, these acts were done as bearing the personage of God-man, and all along from everlasting he acted as such in that capacity, together with his Father."

" *Isaiah* ix. 6, one of his names is *the everlasting Father,* that is, a Father from everlasting, and therefore he must be said to have borne that relation of a Father to us from that time. In the Trinity, take them considered as mere persons, there is but one Father; therefore this title must be given to Christ in God's decrees, upon the consideration of his being God-man in his undertaking and acting accordingly. Paul tells us, *Heb.* ii. that Christ is a Father considered as he is a man, *verse* 13, ' Lo I, and the children thou hast given me.' And Isaiah tells us, he was this from everlasting, before he actually assumed the same nature: He must be *the everlasting Father,* representatively, by bearing the personage of God-man, afore his Father, and undertaking that relation."

Chapter X. page 173. " Col. i. 16, *For by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, &c. all things were created by him and for him.*"

Page 177. " His subserviency to God in the creation is set forth here in three particles, ἐν αὐτῷ, *in him,* δι' αὐτοῦ, *by him,* and εἰς αὐτὸν, *for him:*

" 1. In him, as the exemplary cause; that is, God set up Christ as the pattern of all perfection; for so that human nature united and quickened by the godhead, must needs be, even above the angels themselves; and he drew, in scattered pieces in the rest of the creation, the several perfections met in that human nature as a pattern. And in man's

creation this seems to have been considered by God in that speech, *Let us make man* according *to our image;* that is, after that man who was to be united to God, whom we in our decrees have set up as the pattern and express image of the invisible godhead.

"2. *By him all things were created;* he having been some way the instrument of the creation, as he is Christ God-man anointed, as well as he is actually of redemption." And page 168, "Christ is the medium of God's creation." Page 178. "If he were at all to be made a creature, it was his due personal privilege to have been himself first made, and to have been God's instrument in creation, and to have uttered those words which were spoken by God, 'Let there be light, Let there be sun, moon,' &c. even as it was his due, when he assumed our nature, to have been filled with all that personal glory which he hath now in heaven. But for the accomplishment of other ends this was suspended, namely, that he might first become sin and a curse for us: So, I say, it was his due to have existed in his human nature first, and then as God's word and instrument, he should have created all things, as he wrought miracles when he was here on earth; and though it was suspended for glorious ends, yet God gives him the glory of creation virtually, that he created all things by him, and by virtue of his incarnation. And in creating, to shew that he should have done it as his *Logos*, or Word to be made flesh, he accordingly acts his part, as in Gen. i. 3, *God said, Let there be light*, which but for this very mystery needed not have been. Yea, such seems to have been his subserviency to God herein, that John contents not himself only to have said, that *all things were made by him;* but further adds, *without him was not any thing made that was made.*"

Chapter XI. page 180. "Christ as God-man is the Creator of all things, proved by 1 Cor. viii. 6, *One Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things.*" Page 181. "This is not attributed to him as man, singly considered; nor is it a property of God considered singly as God only, but as a man who was one person with God, or God-man; nor are these things attributed to him merely by way of communication of properties, whereby what was proper only to the divine nature is attributed to the manhood; but these all, by way of influence and virtual efficacy, are attributed to him as God-man, as truly as the works of redemption, mediation," &c.

Page 183. "His being appointed Lord, will send us to a higher date than his actual ascension to heaven, even to afore the creation; yea, even to eternity; *Heb.* i. 2, God *hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds:* Yea, and because as God-man, he was appointed Lord of them, therefore it was also that God commissioned him to make them, considered as God-man, to make his title of lordship even as Son of man proper and direct, and adequately full to him, and there needs no more to verify this, *viz.* that as God-man he made the worlds, and virtually as man, as well as efficiently, both as God and man in the sense it hath been explained in."

Chapter XII. page 184. "That Christ, as God-man, is the Creator of all things, is further proved from John i. 1, 2, 3, *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God; the same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him, &c.* This name, *the Word of God*, imports both his being the image of God the Father, as the second person, and the image or manifestation of God to us in human nature. Many of our protestant divines have altogether declined the first sense, and betaken themselves to the latter, *viz.* That Christ is called *the Word*, in relation to his being manifested in a human nature, and therein to manifest the whole of

God unto us. This is not appropriated to him only as the Son of God and second person; but as united to human nature; Rev. xix. 13, *He was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood, and his name is called The Word of God.*"

Page 187. "That repetition in the second verse, *viz.* John i. 2, *The same was in the beginning with God*, imports that the second person did then sustain, and take on him another relation, even the person of the Mediator, and enter upon the office, acting the part, and sustaining the place and reputation of it."

Page 189. "Compare this with *Prov.* viii. 22, &c. and the titles, the *Word* and *wisdom*, are in effect and significancy the same in the original languages. Solomon speaks but the same things of him there, that John doth here: *The Word was with God —in the beginning*, that is, *the Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way—I was by him—rejoicing before him;* and so it may explain what is meant by *the beginning* here, namely, *the beginning of creation*, and therefore is not meant of his eternal generation; for so Christ is not the beginning of God's ways, for the ways of God are his goings forth toward his creatures. That speech is all one with *Col.* i. 15, *The first-born of every creature;* being in God's decree of creation the first, the corner-stone, the beginning of the rest, so as it must be meant of Christ, as God-man."

Page 190. "We find, 1 *Cor.* i. 24, that Christ is said to be *the power of God and the wisdom of God;* both which are spoken of him, not as they are essential attributes, in God's nature; for the person of Christ, as a person, is distinct from the attributes which are common to all three; and so, he is not styled the attribute of wisdom, but they are thus spoken of Christ manifestatively, and instrumentally, and executively, and as he is from God, and made use of by God towards us, and in things that concern us, to be the whole scene and manifestation of God's wisdom, and *substratum* of his counsels concerning us. And so also the executive power by whom God effects all he doth. That observation evidently demonstrates this, which Cameron, and many others, have made, by comparing Moses, *Gen.* i. and this first of *John* together, which many things parallel lead to: That whereas Moses in the creation mentions God the Father and the Spirit, two of the persons, yet he veils the Son under that so often repeated speech used of the creation, that God said, *Let there be light;* God said, *Let there be a firmament*, which could not be without mystery; and what other mystery could it be, than that Christ was that Word by whom God created all things? When therefore Christ is termed *the Word of God*, the meaning is, he is *the power of God*, in being his instrument and agent in all he doth, or means to do."

Page 191. "Thus God elected us, and bestowed all things upon us, before the world was, even in Jesus Christ, *Ephes.* i. 4, as then bearing this person of God-man. And thus all the promises which the written word of God contains, were made for us unto Christ, as really bearing that person; and 2 *Tim.* i. 9, they were *given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.* Notable to this purpose is that place, *Tit.* i. 2, 3, where the apostle first says, that *God promised eternal life before the world began:* A promise is a word given forth, and is more than a purpose with one's self; for it is to another: There was a promise made to Christ as then with God. Now merely as second person, he is capable of no promises, but only as he is God-man. It is the Son of God as he is 'Jesus Christ, in whom all promises are yea and amen,' 2 Cor. i. 19, 20."

Page 192. "When God came to make creatures, he did it by Jesus Christ, as sustaining this person of God-man; Ephes. iii. 9, God *created all things by Jesus Christ;*

and John adds, 'Nothing was made without him that was made;' merely to shew the instrumental general dependence God had of him in this work: He was *all in all*, as we say of one that is a right-hand to another; he does nothing without him: Such was Christ to God; not that God had not power essential to have created without him; for it is by that power that Christ did it; but that this power, God's will would never have put forth, but for his assuming to be God-man."

Chapter XIII. page 197. "Christ, God-man, is subservient to God in all the works of his providence; he upholds and supports all things; he governs the world, and he shall judge it.

"*First*, 'For the upholding all things.' That is evident in this text of Col. i. 17, *By him all things consist;* he is the corner-stone that keeps the building and all the parts of it together; *Heb.* i. 2, 3, it is said, 'he upholds all things, *by the word of his power*,' and it is spoken of him not simply considered as a second person, but as God-man, for so he is *heir appointed.*

"*Secondly*, Whilst the world stands, he governs it, easeth God of that burthen, and is his *pro-rex* for him. 'All judgment is committed to the Son;' John v. 22, *For the Father judgeth no man; but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: And the government is upon his shoulders;* Isaiah ix. 6. And then,

"*Thirdly*, When he hath thus governed the world with a greater advantage unto God, then this *man, Christ Jesus*, will judge it also at the last, and give all men their accounts; Acts xvii. 31, *He hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world—by that man whom he hath ordained.* God would not employ a mere creature in this work, it was too great an honour; and yet it was meet it should be done visibly and audibly, and to the satisfaction of all men's consciences, both concerning themselves and others. God would have a person in the Trinity manifest in a creature like unto us to do it, armed with power and authority, because he is God; and yet a man that should deal with creatures in their own way; in a rational and audible way convince them, and visibly sentence them, so as they should be able to see and hear their judge as man, and yet fear and dread him as being God. And this is a high and great service, which Christ as man shall do for God; for a man in a vocal manner to be able to clear the accounts of the world, which, how entangled are they! And punctually to give every man his due in righteousness! A man, that shall be able to convince all God's enemies of all their hard speeches they have spoken against him, as Enoch the seventh from Adam prophesied, *Jude*, verse 14; able to give a full and satisfactory account of all God's ways and proceedings, which men cavil at; to justify God's decrees, which men quarrel with, and think much at; and his children whom men despise and bear down! One able to bring to light the secrets of all hearts, so as all men shall judge of every man; 1 Cor. iv. 5, *Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: And then shall every man have praise of God.* One able to 'search the deep things of God,' and bring forth his counsels, for the 'books are then opened;' *Rev.* xx. 12.

"*Lastly*, After all this, Christ is the 'founder of that other world into which he brings his children.' That personal fulness that is in God-man is reserved by God as a subject of that depth and glory to take up, together with his own perfections, the thoughts of men and angels for ever; *Rev.* xxi. 23, The *city had no need of the sun, neither of the*

moon to shine in it; for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. When those two great volumes, this of his word, and that of his world, which now in this life are put into our hands, to read the characters of his glory in, by faith; when both these shall be folded up and clean laid aside, then will the person of Christ, God-man, be set forth to us, to entertain us for ever with the sight of the *glory of God in the face of Christ.*"

Having drawn out this little abridgement of this excellent treatise, I take the freedom to make these few remarks on it:

Remark I. This learned and pious author plainly manifests that he could not expound several Scriptures which speak of Christ, both in the Old Testament and the New, without taking in his human nature to be the joint subject of such ascriptions, because there are so many things expressed in them below the dignity of godhead: And therefore he supposes the human nature of Christ to exist in the view or idea of the Father from everlasting, and to have all those glorious actions and characters ascribed to him as man united to God, or as God united to man. And it is to be observed, that he does this not in one sentence or two, or in one page or two, but it is the chief design of that whole *Discourse of the Glories and Royalties that belong to Jesus Christ, considered as God-man,* which fills up more than a hundred pages in folio.

Remark II. He supposes the *man Christ Jesus* not only to have an existence in the divine idea through all the various ancient transactions of creation, providence, &c. But he asserts that he ought actually to have existed the first of all creatures, and to have been as it were an under-agent in the creation of the world; but that this actual glory was suspended for four thousand years, merely because he was to bear sin and the curse for the redemption of men.

Remark III. He rises much higher in his ascriptions to the *man Jesus Christ,* than I have dared to do in any part of my discourse, and invests him with much more sublime powers than any angelic spirit; and yet he supposes his soul to be a human soul still, and calls him a man: He gives him most illustrious prerogative, on the account of his virtual union to his divine nature, all which he asserts to be his early due, had he actually then existed.

Remark IV. The actual pre-existence of the *man Jesus,* or the human soul of Christ, and his actual union to his divine nature, can never withhold or diminish any of those sublime characters, those illustrious honours or prerogatives which this author saith were his due, had he then existed, and which he supposes to be attributed to him in Scripture by the figure prolepsis, and by way of anticipation, and which were given him by God the Father, as supposing him then to exist in his idea long before his actual existence.

Remark V. The exposition of all these Scriptures will appear much more natural, easy, and plain, by the doctrine of the actual pre-existence of the soul of Christ, than by the mere decree of his existence, or supposition of it, only in the idea and foreknowledge of God. In the proleptical sense, only learned men can find the meaning of them. In this sense of actual existence, the meanest Christian may read and understand what he reads. And it is a general rule among divines, for the interpretation of Scripture, never to introduce figures of speech, nor to explain the word of God in a figurative sense, but where the plain obvious literal sense has something in it inconsistent or improper.

Remark VI. There is not one Scripture in all the Bible which denies the actual existence of Christ's human soul before the foundation of the world, but there are many which in this author's judgment cannot be explained without the supposition of his virtual existence then in the idea of God, and therefore they are supposed to be spoken of him as though he did actually exist, by the help of tropes and figures.

Now I leave it to the judgment of any candid reader, whether those Scriptures which are written for the use of the unlearned, ought not much rather to be explained in their most easy and obvious sense, than to spread so many and such hard figures of speech almost all over the Bible, the Old Testament and the New, without evident necessity? And it is very reasonable to believe, that had this evangelical writer lived in an age when the doctrine of the pre-existence of the soul of Christ had been freely proposed to the world, he would have embraced it with great readiness and pleasure.

Remark VII. Though these more elevated sentiments and bolder expressions, which I have cited from so great an author, are by no means a standard of truth, nor indeed can I follow him in some of these sublimities, neither do I cite his magnificent expressions concerning the *man Jesus Christ*, nor his expositions of Scripture, as a sufficient proof of what I have advanced; yet it will appear to the world by this collection, that I have not ventured upon such expositions of the Bible, nor such exalted sentiments and language concerning Christ's human nature, without an honourable precedent. If I am mistaken, yet I may reasonably hope that while I have erred and wandered under such a leader, and in so good company, the censure will be but light and gentle, since most of the reproaches which may be cast on me on this account will fall heavy on this venerable author, whose name has been honourable, and his praise great among the churches.

THE END OF THE LAST VOLUME.

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